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Volume 18, Number 1

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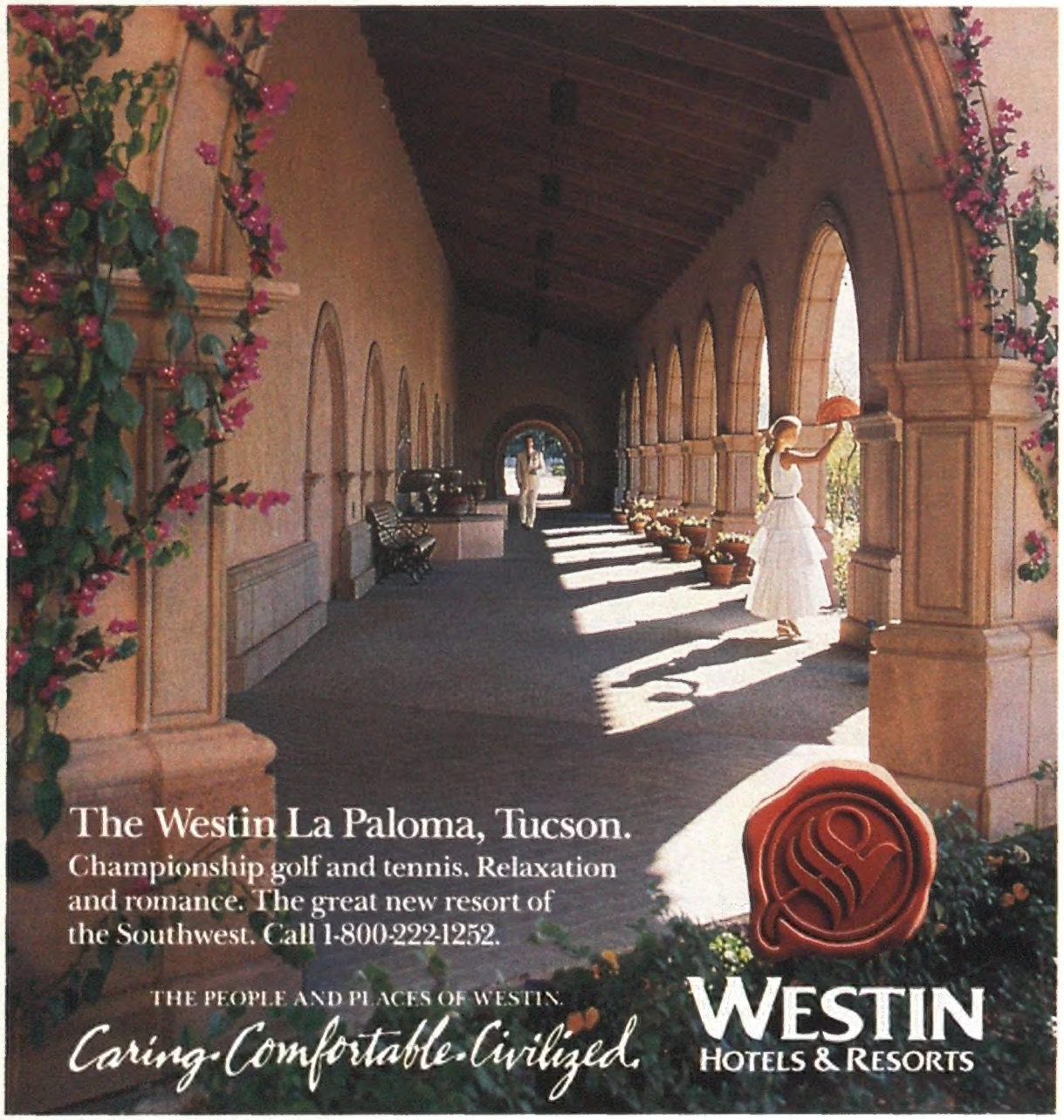
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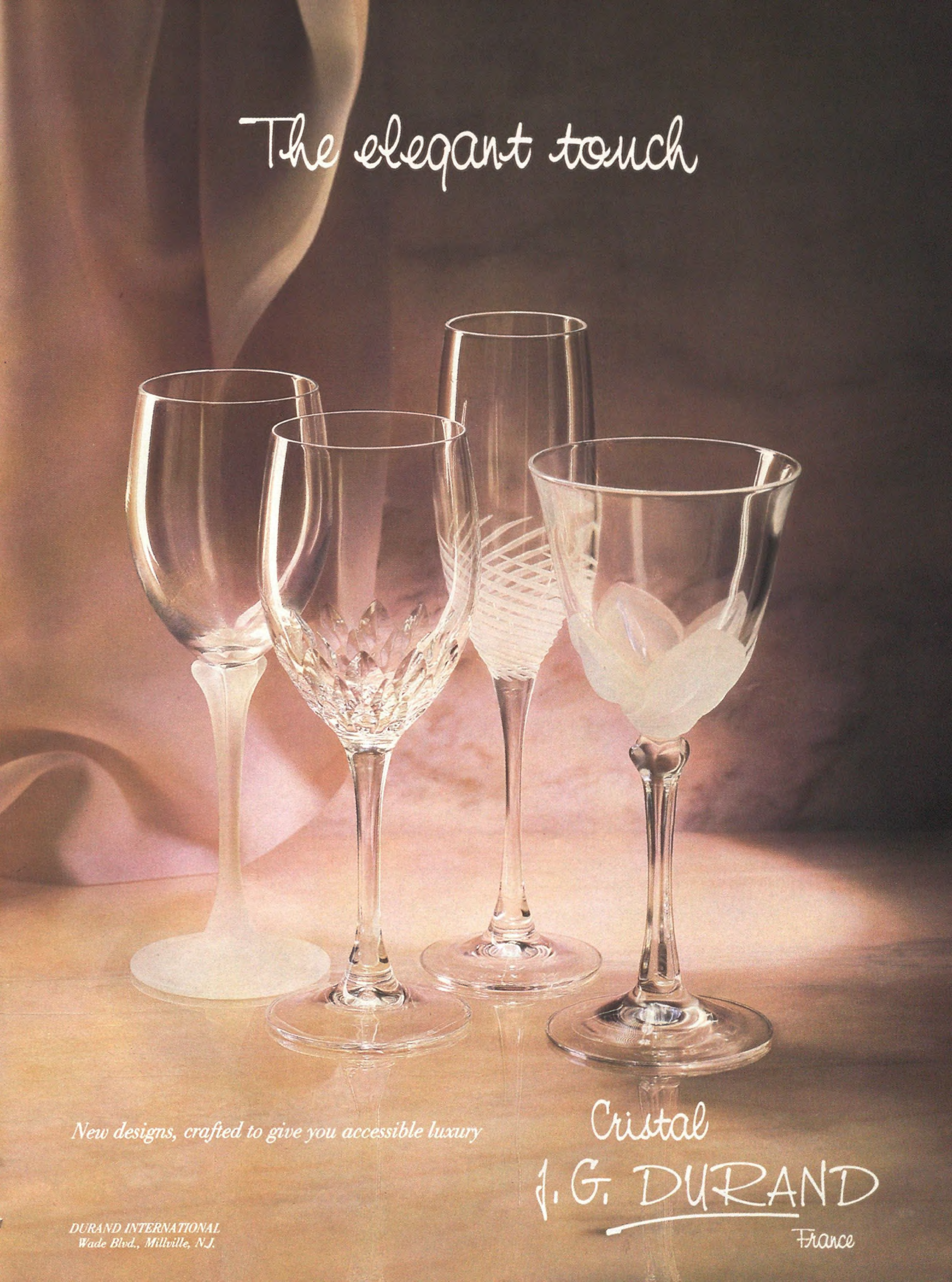
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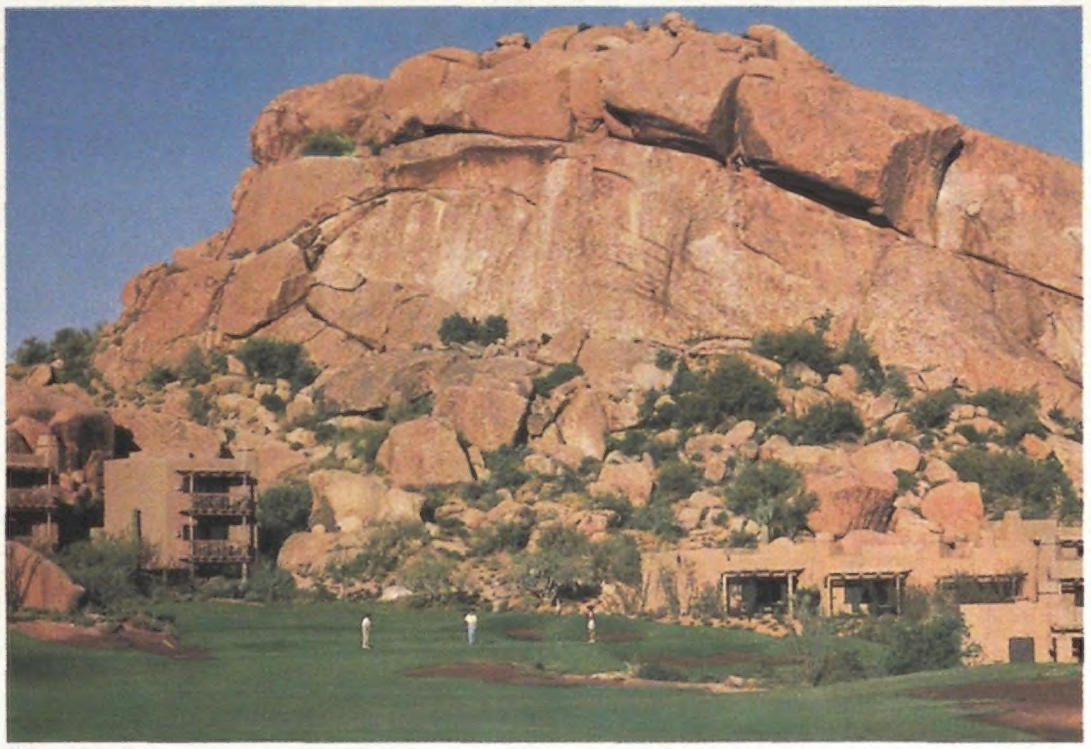

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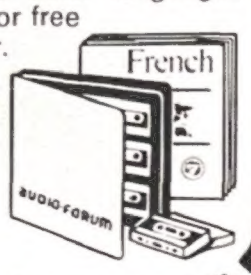

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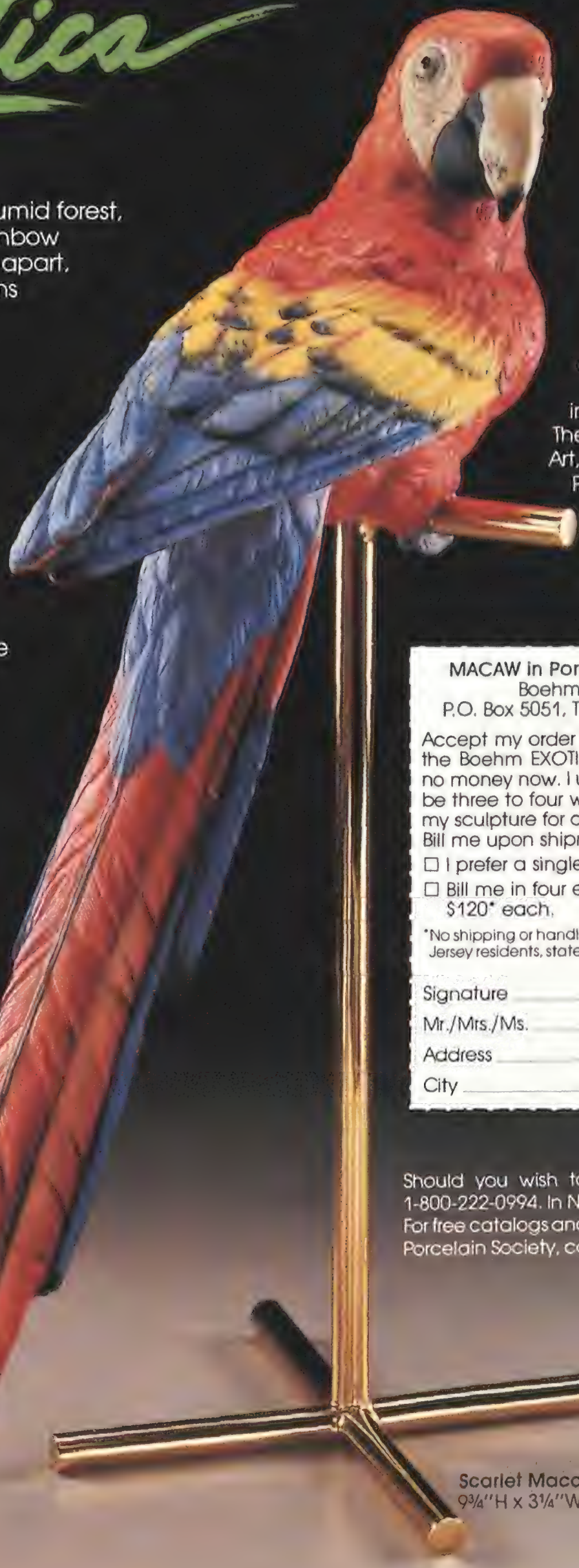

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Secretary Adams' comments

Smithsonian horizons

Vastly improved scientific equipment raises the question: What is the contribution of technique to thought?

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Of course, this also means that the cost of scientific instruments has become a major determinant of which new challenges can be taken up and which must be set aside for another day. (Expenditures for advanced equipment can substantially exceed those for entire research groups of highly trained scientific personnel.) As we confront these changes, old questions reemerge with new importance: To what extent are our tools or instruments more than merely passive means for testing or putting into effect our prior designs? Historically, what has been the contribution of technique to thought?

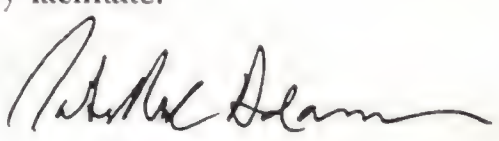
Historians of science have tended to see the long sweep of our scientific past primarily as an unfolding series of conceptual breakthroughs. Most of the original scientific treatises that are their principal sources quite naturally concentrate on the exposition of new theories and fundamental discoveries, and take largely for granted the evolving capabilities of the requisite equipment. But as a nonspecialist, perhaps I may be excused for drawing back from these "texts" and giving greater weight to considerations of "context." There is reason to doubt the adequacy of seeing merely a secondary, or validating, role for instruments and the lines of experimental variation that they invite. Can we justify walling off any domain in which great, abstract ideas are advanced and tested from their wider cultural and intellectual setting?

Consider the frequent interplay of scientific and technological discoveries in the past. Galileo's improvements of the telescope made possible his discovery of the moving mountain shadows on the moon. This momentous discovery—fixing in place a sense of the scale of the heavens—followed several centuries of improvements by nameless craftsmen in lens and glassmaking. Intersecting with further improvements were Descartes' paraboloid surfaces, Newton's work on chromatic aberration, and the new and unsuspected world that was revealed by the microscope.

An equally interesting case can be made for the clock. A purely human artifice became a kind of Gestalt for a divinely ordered universe. Clockwork as a mechanism has a connection with the deterministic philosophies of Kepler, Descartes and Boyle. But precise, accurate measurements of time intervals are also a starting point for Newtonian mechanics.

The rapid current advances in instrumental capabilities share many of these indeterminately scientific or technological qualities. In short, the pursuit of measurable minutenesses or immensities of both space and time may well owe as much to practical technological discoveries as to deep scientific insights. These scales of ascending or descending orders of magnitude, reaching into or beyond the ordinary world of human perception and experience, in a very real sense have set the dominant, long-term directions of ensuing scientific endeavor.

Obviously, we must avoid celebrating refinement of measurement for the sake of such refinement alone. But in an age of unprecedentedly rapid and diversified scientific discovery, we also cannot assume that new ideas and theories are all self-generating and that facilities merely facilitate.



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At a rededication ceremony in the spring, it will take its place alongside two other historic plaques—commemorating the Peace Convention of 1861 and the opening of the 1901 Willard—outside the Pennsylvania Avenue entrance.

Oliver T. Carr jr.
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Dear Sir: Your article brought back the memory of an impoverished, fresh young physician (me), who was a guest at that wonderful hotel in 1947. Just out of the Army and trying to get my practice started, I took the cheapest room they had—seven dollars a day, as I recall. Our meetings were in the new George Washington University Hospital—all glass and metal and hugely expensive—$50 per day for a room, while at my Elmira, New York, hospital the going rate was $10. I knew I'd never live to see *our* charges skyrocket to such a sum. (That was in the days of the three-dollar house call, $50 delivery and $60 a year for malpractice insurance—$5,000 award limit for the first suit, $10,000 for multiple suits, set at those figures because the insurance companies thought if it were higher it would encourage people to sue!)

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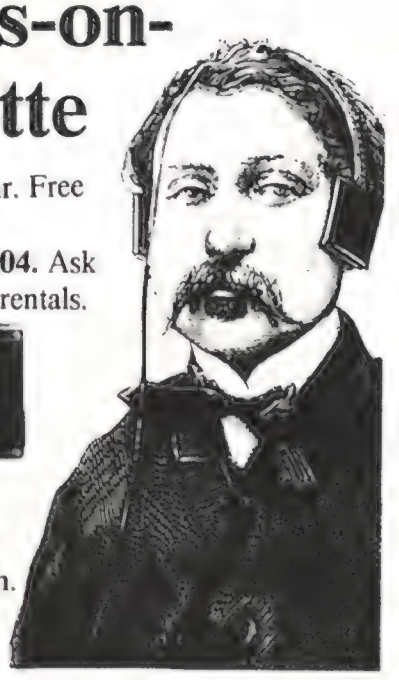

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ately served a demitasse of coffee. This I ignored while waiting to order my breakfast. Not one of the plentiful and courteous waiters came near me. Finally, in despair, I drank the demitasse and prepared to leave. My order was taken then with alacrity and served just in time for me to bolt it down and reach the meeting by cab. Subsequently I drank the demitasse right off, ordered breakfast (89 cents, tip ten cents) and ate in time to walk to the hospital.

I attributed the Willard's strange custom of serving coffee before it was ordered to the prevalence of hangovers in our nation's capital, or to the natives all being A.M. grouches.

Since then I have taken my kids and my brother's kids to Washington several times. We stayed at the Willard and they were awfully nice to us, putting cots in the attic for the youngsters. One of these days I will go back and see what restoration hath wrought.

Donald N. Groff, M.D.
Pine City, New York

Dear Sir: In the mid-1940s while awaiting State Department assignment to a foreign post, I lived in the lovely old Willard. Lo and behold, the first week of my sojourn the domestic staff went on strike. So we guests pitched in. We made beds, cleaned bathrooms and manned pushbrooms in Peacock Alley, the lobby and on the front steps.

Alice P. Fuhrman
Sarasota

Dear Sir: We did not have 48 states when the New Willard was completed in 1904. Three state seals must have been added to the lobby ceiling later. And what about the other two?

Dorothy M. Albers
Colorado Springs

The 48 seals included the then territories of Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arizona. Those of Alaska and Hawaii are now in Peacock Alley. Ed.

Blackout

Dear Sir: Michael Parfit definitely captured the quiet commitment of linemen to their jobs. The only better way of gaining an appreciation of their efforts is to work beside them in outage situations. I had little real appreciation until I did just that.

Mark F. Kleinschmidt, General Manager
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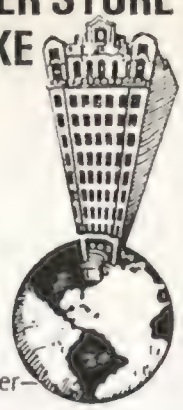

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Dear Sir: Michael Parfit repeats an interesting but false myth that the 1965 blackout in New York City led to an increase in births nine months later.
David C Balderston
New York City
Although our source checked 18 major hospitals in New York, the city's Bureau of Health Statistics reports a downward trend in births throughout the 1960s. Ed.

Stage manager

Dear Sir: I have had the opportunity to see many Broadway shows and, from my work with community theater, I know of the behind-the-scenes magic. My applause is always for the stage manager and crew as well as for the actors. Bravo, Mr. Hall—from a stage manager.
Tara Leininger
Huntington, New York

Wildebeest

Dear Sir: John Heminway leaves the impression that since there is no agriculture in the Arctic, the great herds of caribou are safe. Unfortunately, that is not true.

Each spring the 160,000 caribou of the Porcupine herd migrate hundreds of miles from their wintering grounds in Canada to the Arctic Wildlife Refuge in northeastern Alaska. The cows drop their calves on the relatively narrow coastal plain wedged between the rugged Brooks Range and the Beaufort Sea. This area is now threatened by a proposal to open it up to exploration and development for oil, even though information on the potential for finding recoverable deposits is very speculative. Such development would have a severe impact on the caribou, musk oxen, wolves, polar bears, not to mention the 108 species of birds that inhabit the refuge.

Environmental groups, native villagers and the Canadian government have urged that the area be off limits to development, but our administration and the oil industry are pushing to open it up. Ultimately, Congress must decide the fate of North America's Serengeti.
Cynthia E. Wilson, Executive Director
Friends of the Earth
Washington, D.C.

Friday the 13th

Dear Sir: In acknowledging the good things associated with the number 13, Paul Hoffman overlooked the "baker's

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dozen"—or 13 for the price of 12—lagniappe that has turned generations of doughnut and cookie lovers into triskaidekaphiles.
Allan Fallow
Alexandria, Virginia

Dear Sir: Our family really enjoyed Paul Hoffman's story on triskaidekaphobia! We consider the 13th a very lucky date. Our first daughter was born 11 years ago in February, on Friday the 13th. Three years later our next child, a girl, was born on Friday the 13th, in July. And a year and a half later our third child, a boy, was due on Friday the 13th of March. But alas, he was so anxious to be born he came on February 28th—13 days early!
Sandra and Bill Dixon
Collingswood, New Jersey

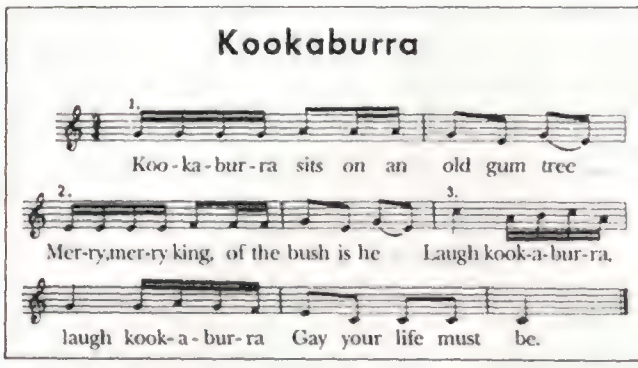
Mall

Dear Sir: We have an American analogue to Australia's Laughing Jack—our pheasantlike chachalaca (*Ortalis vetula*, family Cracidae), native to the Rio Grande Valley, Mexico and Central America.

The onomatopoeia of the name is, as with the kookaburra, a totally inadequate rendition of the shattering, shrieking, howling recitative with which flocks of the birds greet the dawn—and each other—from trees and thickets on the banks of our *resacas*, those oxbow lakes and reservoirs formed by old channels of the river. The sound is of a quality and volume that can—and often does—bring a sound sleeper bolt upright, awake and quivering.

Still, it is a sound dear to the hearts of confirmed Valley residents.
Matthew D. Smith jr.
Brownsville, Texas

Dear Sir: I first heard of the kookaburra about 30 years ago, at camp, where we sang the following Australian round:



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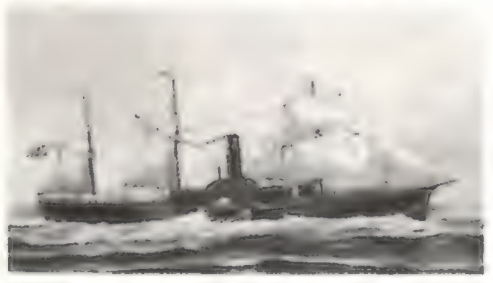

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Around the Mall and beyond

On a pleasant morning last winter, shortly before Washington entered the new Ice Age, a family of three stood helplessly on the Mall between the Arts and Industries Building and the Hirshhorn and looked about them in dismay.

"Excuse me," the man said as I approached. "Where in the world is the Smithsonian, anyway?"

When I explained that it was pretty much all around us, they were dumbfounded. Like thousands of other visitors, they'd never realized that the Institution was not just one building alone (in their minds devoted to air and space), but seven within camera range, plus five others not too far away, plus a huge storage and research facility in nearby Maryland, plus a museum in New York City, plus five major establishments in this hemisphere, plus Lord knows how many temporary stations around the globe.

A few days later, a desperate young woman seized me by the lapels in the midst of a remote and perhaps slightly arcane section of the Museum of Natural History and begged to know the way back to the rotunda with its comfy old elephant. I got her headed right—at least I think I did, being pretty bewildered myself—and she shouted down the length of the gallery, "Come back, John, you're getting in deeper."

For quite a number of years, certainly since this magazine started in 1970, there has been a public information desk and a reception desk for Smithsonian Associates in the Great Hall of the Castle. Here, all these questions about where you are and how deep you're getting in were answered. But the visitors grew in number over the years, from a mob to an army to a fairly good share of the world's population. The Institution now draws some 23,000,000 people a year. That's more than there are in Australia.

So this reception and information service is going to be beefed up. Beginning this fall, renovation will start to give it a new, high profile. And, in time, a big spruced-up Smithsonian Information Center will lie in wait for the invading visitors, ready to pounce upon them and cram facts into their heads. After it opens, all that one of you strangers to the Mall will have to do is find your way, somehow, to the Smithsonian Castle—almost all Washington cabbies know it by that name, and anyway the Smithsonian Metro station is close at hand—and your worries will be over.

In the splendid Great Hall of this unmistakable building, you'll be quickly, thoroughly, entertainingly and accurately briefed. When the Castle has finished with you, you'll be able to head straight for the Hope diamond, the First Ladies' gowns, the Wright Flyer, the cracked-plate Lincoln photograph, or several hundred thousand other treasures of your choice, with confidence and understanding. You'll return home and tell your friends all about the museums and how to get to them, and so serve as much-needed disciples.

All this will be achieved, I'm happy to report, without altering the architectural integrity or basic configuration of the Great Hall. The Mall access to the Castle will be subtly modified, however, though not enough to redo the engraving on the Institution's stationery. Two gently curved promenades, dotted with benches, will lead you to doors on either side of the present main entrance, the porte cochere, or old carriage entrance, that's always been there, facing the Mall. Some trees will be picked up and replanted to more gracefully accommodate these graded walks. The new entrances will take you into a reception area just inside the familiar foyer that opens onto James Smithson's final resting place. The doors actually already exist, but the promenades will emphasize both as additional main entrances, and thus make it a lot easier for you to get in and out of the building.

From the foyer you'll enter the Great Hall, designed by James Renwick back in the late 1840s. Straight ahead of you will stand an information desk, a long oval in the exact center of the room. Here, volunteers may refer you directly to the museum that most interests you,

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or to additional displays that will help you make up your mind. Maps and large models will indicate where you stand in relation to other Smithsonian buildings and what your options are. Wall panels and exhibition screens will describe what you can see in the various museums. Video sets will provide facts, with captions in several foreign languages as well as English. Audio devices will explain the setup to visually impaired visitors.

Turning left from the entrance, you'll find, at the far eastern end of the Great Hall, twin theaters showing a 20-minute film about the Smithsonian. Screenings will be shown on a staggered schedule, so the film will run three times an hour, for the benefit of about 70 people each time. That's an enviable teaching rate of a potential 210 people an hour, all learning what to expect when they reach the museums and getting a good idea of what the Institution is all about. Over the months, that production of facts will surely make a dent in the bewilderment that thousands of Smithsonian seekers now share.

There will also be two new rest rooms, ample enough to suit the tensest carloads of travel-weary children, and near these will be new staff quarters. At the western end of the Great Hall, a corridor will lead into a new Associates' lounge.

The Associates' reception desk, now in the center of the long room, will be moved to the western end of the hall, right at the entrance to the new lounge area. This is of particular interest to those of us who recall the birth of this magazine—and with it the National Associates. For back in those shaky days that desk was tiny, and one lonely soul was quite enough to handle its business. Then the numbers exploded, and the desk expanded, with staff and volunteers standing watch behind it. And now the Associates are so numerous, well over two million, that a special new area will be made available to them in which they will be able to rest, relax, and talk with volunteers armed with still more information about the Smithsonian.

If you pass through the center of the Great Hall from the foyer, rounding the big central information desk, you will enter an area, a sort of second foyer, which used to be the staff office for the Visitor Information and Associates' Reception Center (or VIARC, as it is affectionately called), and hence not really open to visitors. Here appeared the strange, forgotten ceiling described in this column in the January 1986 issue, where a painting that dated back to the turn of this century was uncovered. The room was the pleasant brainstorm of the then Secretary, Samuel Pierpont Langley: a gallery for children.

When I last saw that ceiling, enough plaster had been carefully chipped away to reveal most of the artwork beneath it. The next step was for the work to be fully restored, a clever and meticulous process, which is now under way with help from the Smithsonian's Conservation Analytical Laboratory and a specially assembled team of restoration specialists.

This room, which once rang with the cries of children and then with the clack of typewriters, is now to be called the "Porte des fleurs," for it will open onto the new Enid A. Haupt Garden. The exit from it is the old south entrance to the Castle—sealed shut ever since I've been associated with the Smithsonian. Now at last it will swing wide to welcome garden strollers into the Castle and to set new

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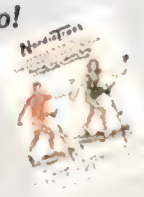

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visitors, fresh from their orientation in the Great Hall, on the garden paths and toward the entrance pavilions of the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and the National Museum of African Art, which the Institution plans to open in the fall at about the same time that these Castle modifications are to start. Yet another path will lead to the Kiosk and the vast underground Quad project (*Mall*, May 1986).

The south door is on the north-south axis of the Castle, in line with the porte cochere. Stand in it, facing the garden, and you'll be staring at the center of the new Renwick gate, a wrought-iron wonder with pillars built of the same reddish sandstone as is the Castle. The gate stands exactly between the two new museum pavilions, and beyond, your line of sight will travel under the "bridge" of the Forrestal Building and up the broad mall that leads to L'Enfant Plaza.

Funding for the $2.7 million Smithsonian Information Center project is being raised privately, with leadership gifts from the Pew Memorial Trust and The Kresge Foundation. A challenge grant from the latter is being met by generous contributions from the Contributing Membership of the Smithsonian Associates, the National Board and the James Smithson Society.

The new information center will open at 9 in the morning to offer visitors an hour of orientation—an attractive and effective cram school of Smithsoniana—before the museums open their doors. Maybe there should be a special session for some of us Smithsonian workers so we can figure the place out ourselves.
Edwards Park

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Phenomena, comment and notes

The 1987 State of the World *describes a planet crossing thresholds. A global science effort will look for some answers*

The things that worry environmentalists are often invisible, far away or off in the future. It is almost as difficult to make them real in our minds as it is to develop a personal feeling of what it means to say that a galaxy is 12 billion light years away. A reader can nod assent when he sees that the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is rising every year and the Earth may become warmer. But it is not very real. This summer may be hotter than last, but the next after that may be cooler.

We read about air pollution and acid rain and it all sounds unpleasant, but things do not seem any different when we walk in the woods—except for an occasional summer day when smog burns the eyes. We go on about our business. And then something happens, something we can see. The forests of Europe start to die (SMITHSONIAN, November 1985). We are not talking about a potential threat anymore, we are talking about dead trees.

For a while even that seemed far away, no matter how serious. Then in December a story in the *New York Times* brought forest death home to the breakfast table. The sugar maples of the northeastern United States and Canada are in trouble. Maple-syrup production is down 25 to 50 percent. One outfit in New Hampshire normally produces 12,000 gallons of syrup from 35,000 taps. Last year they tapped more trees than ever but came up with only 7,600 gallons. Foresters in Quebec found 82 percent of the sugar maples in that province

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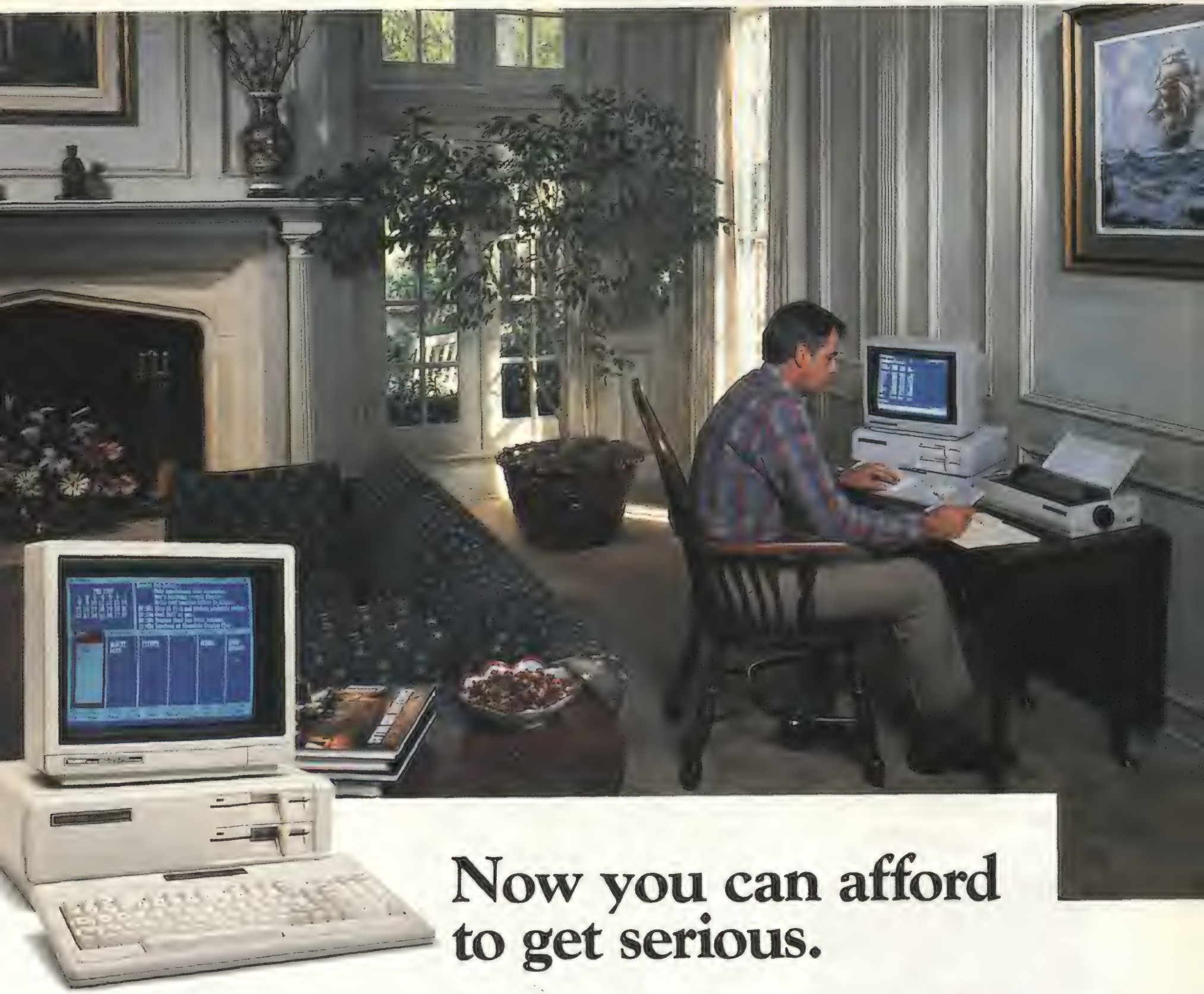

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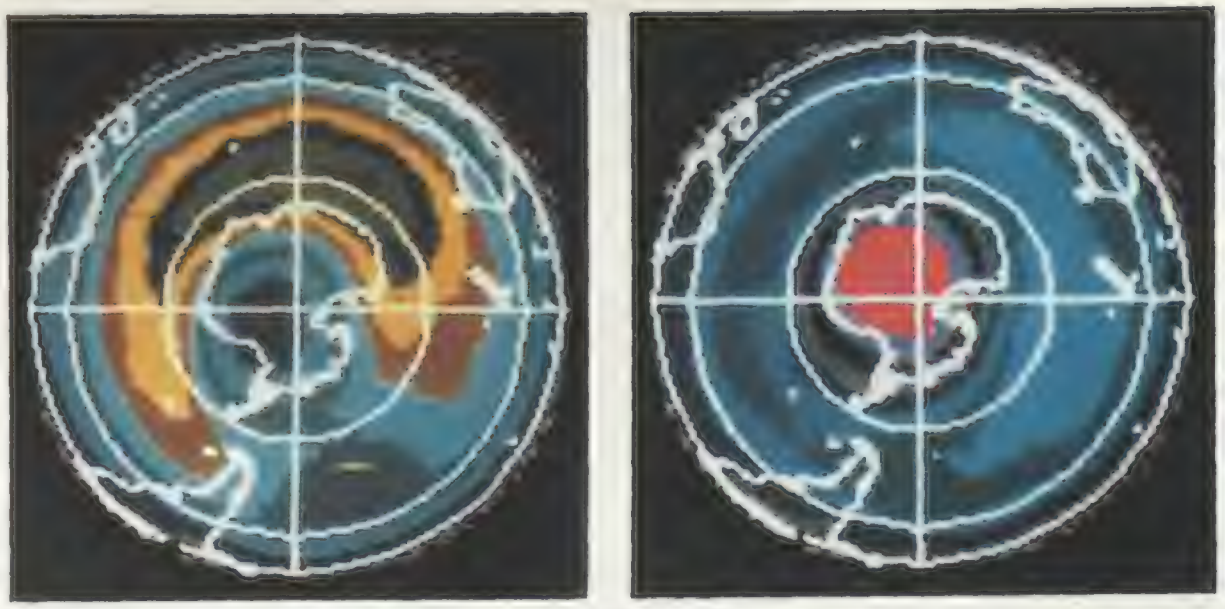


Satellite data shows ozone layer over Southern Hemisphere has thinned in just six years. Levels in the "hole" over Antarctica (dark in 1979, at left; pink in 1985) have dropped 50 percent.

were failing. If worst comes to worst, I'm sure the food technologists will come up with a substitute, and a couple of generations from now the loss will not matter much. But it scares me.

Fifteen or so years ago, scientists began to worry that certain gases we were releasing to the atmosphere could damage the ozone layer (SMITHSONIAN, June 1975). Ozone is nothing more than a form of oxygen in which three atoms combine to form a molecule instead of the usual two. At ground level it is a pollutant and health hazard, but the natural ozone layer 20 to 30 miles high in the atmosphere protects us from dangerous components of the sun's ultraviolet radiation. Without the ozone layer, more of that radiation would reach the Earth's surface, causing a rise in skin cancers and possibly a general depression of the immune system.

Nothing much happened in the late 1970s, however. The United States banned the use of chlorofluorocarbons, the chief suspects, in nonessential aerosol sprays in 1978, although few other countries followed suit. Still, the ozone layer appeared to remain intact and that particular scare dropped out of the news. Now scientists have discovered a "hole" the size of the United States that appears every austral spring in the ozone layer over Antarctica. They did not expect it and do not know why it appeared or what will happen next. Antarctica is about as far away as you can get, and yet the news must be of more than passing interest to people living in the high latitudes of Argentina and Chile.

Both the forest death in Europe and the hole in the ozone came as surprises, signs that planetary processes are crossing significant thresholds. The first almost certainly and the second possibly are the result of human activities. The fourth annual *State of the World*, from Lester R. Brown's Worldwatch Institute here in Washington, warns that the planet seems poised on a number of thresholds, all of them ominous. At the February news conference releasing this year's volume, Edward C. Wolf, associate project director, pointed out that gaps in our scientific understanding mean we do not know which way to jump. Scientists have traditionally worked in narrow specialties, he said, and funding agencies have preferred short-range studies.

What the world needs are some long-range studies, the unglamorous, unexciting years of pulling together huge amounts of information and then analyzing it well enough to understand what is happening and what is to be done. The world of science is considering at least three such Herculean tasks. Molecular biologists are debating whether it would be worth the billions of dollars and disruption of their discipline to make an accelerated effort to map the entire human genetic mechanism, all three billion chemical units that define a human being. Field ecologists would like to take an inventory of every species on Earth, a number we do not know now within an order of magnitude.

The third, equally ambitious project is about to begin. Known as the International Geosphere-Biosphere Program: A Study of Global Change, it is the work of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), a kind of United Nations of science composed of the na-

The Royal Canadian Mint Proudly Announces A New Commemorative Proof Silver Dollar

The Government of Canada announces a new Silver Dollar commemorating the 400th anniversary of John Davis' search for the Northwest Passage.

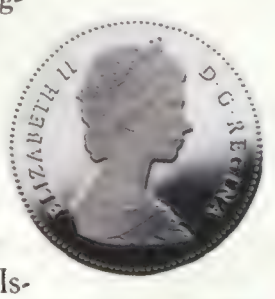
He was never as well known as Henry Hudson, Roald Amundsen and other explorers who succeeded him. Yet, 400 years later, John Davis' many contributions make him one of the most important figures in Northwest Passage exploration — as well as the major influence on cartography, navigation and surveying of his time.

Now, the Royal Canadian Mint is proud to introduce a new Proof Silver Dollar for 1987, honoring the 400th anniversary of John Davis' third and final voyage of exploration to find the Northwest Passage in 1587.

The 1987 Proof Silver Dollar is the 22nd in a historic series of commemorative silver dollars authorized by the Government of Canada since 1935.

Description and Specifications

On the reverse is a breathtaking design by Nova Scotia artist Christopher Gorey of a 16th century ship — similar to the pinnace Davis used on his third voyage — viewed from three quarters astern. A large iceberg looms in the background. Below this is the bilingual legend "DÉTROIT DE DAVIS STRAIT, 1587-1987" signifying this year as the 400th anniversary of John Davis' discovery of the strait located east of Baffin Island. The obverse shows the beloved effigy of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, by Arnold Machin.



The 1987 Silver Dollar is composed of 50% silver and 50% copper. It weighs 23.33 grams (.82 ounces) and measures 36.07 millimeters (1.42 inches) — just slightly smaller than the large U.S. silver dollar.

The Discoveries of John Davis, Explorer and Navigator

While John Davis never actually discovered the Northwest Passage, his explorations from 1585-1587 are most important because they increased the geographical knowledge of the area, and added great insight into the flora, fauna and people of Greenland and Baffin Island. His invention of the quadrant provided the first accurate means of determining latitude. Subsequent explorers would marvel at the remarkable precision of Davis' findings. His charts lighted the way for future arctic explorations. His descriptions of the Inuit (Eskimos) were among the earliest. And his "Traverse Book," providing a day-by-day account of his third voyage, was the model for the ships' logs used today. For these reasons and many others, John Davis is considered by historians as one of the greatest arctic explorers of all time.

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tional academies of science of 71 nations. The goal? "To describe and understand the interactive physical, chemical and biological processes that regulate the total Earth system, the unique environment it provides for life, the changes that are occurring in that system, and the manner by which these changes are influenced by human actions."

Around the world scientists will spend at least ten years and a billion dollars trying to nail down the whole Earth system. They will study the movement of energy, water and chemicals between oceans and atmosphere and land and the atmosphere; how the atmosphere responds to changes in solar output at different wavelengths; what happens in the upper layer of the ocean where 99 percent of the solar radiation is absorbed. They will monitor the Earth from satellites and ground stations, the latter strategically deployed in different biomes. They will learn to make new computer models of the Earth system, and how to deal creatively with information coming in at the rate of a quadrillion bits a day. They will use the Earth as a library, examining tree rings, ice cores, ocean sediments and coral deposits to get a better fix on what has happened. When we finish we will have taken a giant step forward.

We still don't know, for example, if the Earth is warming up as predictions have it. All the coal and oil we have burned over the past century have pumped more carbon dioxide into the air than either plants or the ocean can absorb; no one disputes that the level is rising, up 9.5 percent just since 1958. Carbon dioxide allows sunlight through to the surface of the Earth, but acts as a barrier to the infrared radiation that normally carries some of the heat away. This is the famous "greenhouse effect." Other gases, notably methane, contribute to this growing imbalance.

So far, however, no one can stand up and say that as of today, right now, the Earth is indeed warming. The best evidence to date may come from Alaska, where Arthur Lachenbruch and Vaughn Marshall of the U.S. Geological Survey have been measuring temperatures in oil exploration wells in the high Arctic. Temperature changes take known amounts of time to propagate through the frozen earth: a given depth carries information about surface temperatures a given length of time ago; the ground "remembers." Lachenbruch and Marshall found a warming at the surface of the permafrost layer, ranging from 4 to 7 degrees F, that has occurred during the past decades to a century ago. Meteorologists at the University of East Anglia in England believe they have documented a warming trend over the past 134 years. Five of the nine warmest years in that period have come after 1978. Still, none of this is definitive. We do not know.

If the Earth does warm the oceans will rise, both from thermal expansion of the existing water and from the melting of glaciers. Scientists calculate that the oceans have risen four inches in the past century, mostly from the melting of midlatitude glaciers, such as those that survived until recently in Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. (The rise seems like more along the East Coast of the United States, where the land is subsiding about eight inches per century.)

The Environmental Protection Agency has predicted sea level will gain another foot on the United States in just the next 30 to 40 years and three to five feet in another century. The National Academy of Sciences is not quite so alarmed, calling for a little more than two feet in the next hundred years. A couple of feet can be a monumental change for a low-lying coastal area, however. In parts of Florida one vertical foot can mean 1,000 horizontal feet of land lost to the sea. Louisiana already is losing 50 square miles of wetlands a year. Bangladesh could lose ten percent of its land area, the agriculturally productive coastal regions that are already frequent victim to typhoons slamming in from the Bay of Bengal. Atmospheric physicist Michael Oppenheimer pointed out in the *Times* last year that "the ocean food chain may break" with the loss of the wetlands; the salt marshes are the nurseries of the sea and new ones cannot form as fast as old ones are lost.

It is only heroic efforts like that proposed by the ICSU that can tell us for sure what to expect. A lot of people would like to know. The Worldwatch news conference was packed with reporters from China, India, the Soviet Union and Western Europe as well as the United States. Well filled with cold salmon and curried rice, we listened to Brown on the central question his institute addresses: Can we rise to the scientific and political challenge of moving toward a sustainable society? The answer remains to be seen.

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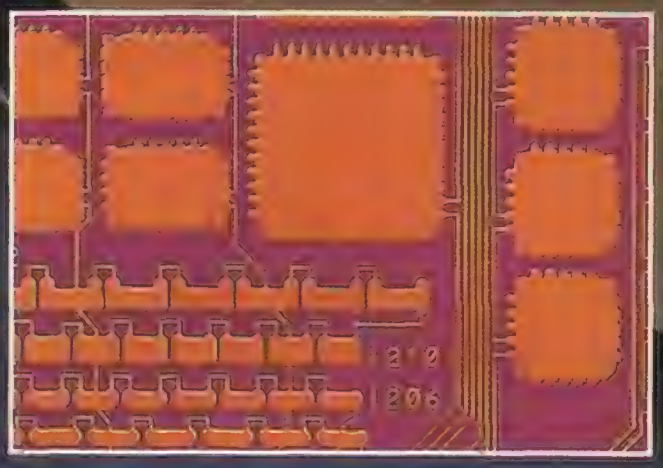

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Like the rare collector dolls of the 19th century, *Rapunzel's* head, hands and feet have been expertly sculptured of fine bisque porcelain. And her exquisite facial features have been delicately painted by hand. Indeed, every precious detail has been lovingly bestowed by gifted craftsmen to create a dream come true.

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F151

By Bil Gilbert

In from the fields, wildflowers find a new welcome among gardeners

The National Wildflower Research Center, founded by Lady Bird Johnson, sows the seeds for the growing native-flora movement

Kittens grow up to be cats. Ice creams and pies are fattening. Babies are expensive and messy. Mothers can cause psychic ailments. In contrast, the reputation of wildflowers is virtually unblemished. Some people may be more moved by them than others, but they have no critics and are accepted everywhere as being good and beautiful. In fact, it is almost impossible to think of them as otherwise because of a semantic Catch-22 that operates in their favor. Even though a plant may be wild and flower, as does, say, poison ivy, it is not perceived as being a wildflower unless it is also good and beautiful. If it is not, it is a weed.

Take, for example, the common dandelion, whose status was recently reviewed by David Northington, executive director of the National Wildflower Research Center, near Austin, Texas. "Even the most enthusiastic wildflower lovers stop short of considering the common dandelion as anything but a weed," Northington commented in the *Austin American Statesman*. "Seldom occurring in great enough density and with only minimally showy flower head, the dandelion simply does not have the right combination of traits to be considered a 'wildflower.' "

However, identifying a true wildflower is not quite so simple as Northington suggests, since growing en masse and having showy blooms is not always enough to promote a plant into this category. The case of purple loosestrife is illustrative. This species is abundant

Texas bluebonnets, the state's flower, can change a meadow into a sea, and also make nice garden displays.

Research botanist Pam Jones uses a dissecting scope to ready winecup blossom for the NWRC herbarium.

Photographs by Jose Azel

Center's executive director, David Northington, often speaks on such beauties as the pink evening primrose.

everywhere east of the Great Plains, often covering many acres and coloring them purple with its tall, flashy flower spikes. Nevertheless, only the ignorant or insensitive will think of purple loosestrife as a true wildflower. In fact, on the grounds that it is an invasive weed, the National Wildflower Research Center has mounted a public education campaign to warn people away from using seed packs—purportedly containing only wildflowers—which may include loosestrife.

The knock against loosestrife is that it is not wild enough. It did not naturally evolve on this continent but was introduced from Europe and escaped from gardens to become feral. Wildflower purists see it as a pushy, aggressive immigrant who would not stay in its place but unbidden has taken over many desirable properties and turned them into botanical ghettos, crowding out the real American plants, hepaticas, cowslips and such.

At least in our imagination, true wildflowers have (or did until very recently) another intangible characteristic that has contributed to our affection for and relationship with them. It was their naturalness, the way in which they grow, quite prettily, more or less as found objects, without us having to supply fertilizers, mulches or other assistance. To many, putting these horticultural innocents into a garden seemed unnatural, a bit despicable, like forcing children to work in sweatshops or caging cardinals. A clump of Dutchman's-breeches might survive physically in a mixed perennial border but there was a subliminal, anthropomorphic feeling that they would decline spiritually and pine for their freedom.

When it comes to horticulture we customarily have worked with cultivated species, most of which are of foreign origins, as is testified to by the long lists of japonicas, orientalises and europeums in standard seed and plant catalogs. These were of course, once, somewhere, wildflowers since we can no more make, from scratch, a petunia than we can a tree. But these cultivars were tamed so long ago that exploiting them for our esthetic pleasure did not create the kind of vague guilt feelings that using wildflowers did.

At a more practical level, we did not garden much with native species because they were not everywhere obtainable and, in brutal truth, often not quite so showy as exotic imports. We might sing songs and write poems about the delicate beauty of the wild rose but usually if we wanted to have an impressive trellis we planted it with a Gloria Swanson or something of that sort—a rose of Mediterranean stock that had been enlarged and spruced up by technicians at a land-grant university.

As hinted, that is how things used to be, but in this as in many other cultural areas the times they are a-changing, rapidly and drastically. Currently a number of respectable horticultural and, even, ecological authorities are strongly advising that it is proper and practical to use lots of wildflowers. Landscape architects are incorporating native perennials into classy and expensive designs. Progressive home gardeners are sowing annual wildflowers, using sedums, saxifrages and speedwells instead of English ivy or Merion bluegrass. A decade ago there was only a handful of suppliers selling native species to a few hobbyists. Now packets of wildflower seeds are available in supermarkets and convenience stores. There are at least 300 commercial growers and nurseries around the country providing species—which only a few seasons ago were thought of as wild—for the wholesale and retail trade. Included among them are: arbutus, asters, bunchberry, columbines, lobelias, lady's slippers, Dutchman's-breeches, Solomon's seal, gentians, spiderworts, trilliums, trout lilies, veronicas, windflowers, yarrows and golden Alexanders. The lists increase substantially each season, as marketing wild (or formerly wild) plants is now a major horticultural growth industry.

Statistics aside, the spirit of the new wildflower movement was nicely expressed one day this past spring by a lady visitor to the National Wildflower Research Center. She had been a serious conventional gardener and among other things had her own greenhouse in which she grew exotic flowers for her home and husband's office. Now she is landscaping a fine new home, which the couple has built in the Austin suburbs, and has treated several large plots with herbicides to kill off potential weeds. When the effects of the tox-

Bil Gilbert, a frequent contributor, last wrote about Arctic explorer Sir John Franklin (June 1985). His most recent book, Our Nature, *was published in 1986.*

Indian blankets surround botanist Annie Paulson as she records data on their germination in marked plots.

Mixed or single species are grown in more than 100 plots to determine response under varied conditions.

ins wear off she will seed and plant with such things as buffalo grass, Indian blankets, primroses and of course Texas bluebonnets, which in that state are regarded somewhat like an herbaceous Alamo or Longhorn, i.e., very proudly and possessively. "My husband teases me sometimes," she confesses, "that I am spending a lot of time and money to grow what were called weeds when he was growing up. But actually he is as excited about using wildflowers as I am."

The moral equivalent of a heavy sweater

It has been suggested that there may be a connection between the new fashionableness of wildflowers and other contemporary enthusiasms for things that have the reputation of being natural and uncontrived. Certainly among recent native-species converts, there are any number of people who also think extremely well of organic foods and fabrics, herbal teas and medicines, white wines, jogging and goose-down quilts. One old-fashioned botanist who does not care to be publicly exposed as a cynic who uses foul language has taken to calling native blooming plants "yuppie flowers." "They think," he remarks, "that a trillium is the floral and moral equivalent of a heavy sweater, handknit from unwashed wool. They don't pay much attention to what's in them but they sprinkle seeds out of those little Nature-in-a-Can packs to demonstrate that they appreciate the pure and simple things of life."

Beyond the faddish element, if indeed there is one, the wildflower boom rises from and reflects some larger social trends. Among other things, while many citizens still find that attractive gardens give pleasure and perhaps enhance real-estate values, they have less interest in and time for old-style, weed-water-and-mow gardening. On evenings and weekends they are now apt to want to recreate by dancing aerobically rather than wrestling with crabgrass.

Out of these realities have evolved some theories and practices now collectively called low-maintenance gardening, which are being heavily touted by landscape designers, horticultural columnists and other opinion makers. This concept constitutes something of a revolt against the traditional style of gardening (manicured beds, borders and lawns) that developed mainly in England but came to be accepted in this country as the right and respectable way of landscaping. Low-maintenance gardening, as the name implies, involves using plants that require less tending than the conventional exotic cultivars and arranging them informally as ground covers and rock, shade and bank plantings where they can sprawl more or less at will.

By way of example, such is the power of entrenched tradition that until quite recently fashionable gardeners in places like Tucson, Arizona, who wanted to dis-

NWRC volunteer Frankie Clark tends her garden as cat Samson basks amid naturalized Peruvian verbena.

Each pollen-laden spine on this Texas-thistle head (above, enlarged three times) belongs to single bloom. Purple prairie verbena, red Indian paintbrush and Engelmann's daisy (opposite) make wild combination.

Though not native, species is unlikely to attain weed status of other aliens, like purple loosestrife.

play their taste and affluence landscaped in the Atlantic style, pouring water on clipped lawns, broadleaf evergreens and flowers native to the damp regions. However, increased population and resulting water shortages in the Southwest have made high-moisture gardening very difficult, expensive and, according to horticultural progressives, antisocial and a bit gauche. The new chic is to do sparse, interesting things with gravel, rocks, mesquites, paloverdes, primroses, prickly poppies, aloes, cacti and other xerophytic species.

Often accidentally, without putting a name to what they were doing, many public agencies, particularly highway departments, have become low-maintenance native-species converts. In the past the general custom was to treat the millions of acres of roadside rights-of-way somewhat like conventional gardens: put in a few flowering hybrids, seed with domestic grasses and keep the areas mowed short. Doing so became increasingly difficult in times of tight budgets. More to save money than to express esthetic preferences, mowing schedules were cut back. Thereafter it was sometimes noted that native species thus allowed to mature—wild geraniums, asters, goldenrods, and so forth—while a bit unkempt by previous standards, were often quite pretty and effective soil stabilizers. The next obvious step was intentionally to encourage natives—by planting and seeding them, by not mowing or spraying except where driver visibility was a consideration.

California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Ohio, Oklahoma and Nebraska, among other states, are cultivating wildflowers along some of their highways. The practice is perhaps most widespread in Texas, where highway officials now estimate that they are saving $32 million a year by encouraging native species, molesting them less frequently with mowers and sprayers. As an added benefit, Texas tourist agencies now promote beautiful roadside wildflowers as another reason for visiting the Lone Star State, where the finer things of nature are appreciated and protected.

At the epicenter of the wildflower boom

The interest in native species is now national, but it is fair to say that the epicenter of the wildflower boom is in the vicinity of Austin, Texas. The National Wildflower Research Center is there because Lady Bird Johnson is. Mrs. Johnson's interest in horticulture and particularly in native plants is neither new nor superficial. Her efforts while in the White House to beautify parks and roadways are still remembered and still benignly influence our public landscapes. She says that she took up this work as being appropriate for a First Lady, but she was and remains personally more interested in preserving wildflowers, which she first came to know and admire as a girl happily roaming about

Brass sieves of varying meshes are used to remove chaff and sort seeds of bluebonnet and other species.

Photographer John Smithers shoots African daisy in all stages of growth for seedling identification project.

the pine thickets and woodlands of rural East Texas.

The LBJ Ranch, lying along the Pedernales River, is now a national historical park. Mrs. Johnson retains the use of the family home and maintains the adjacent grounds—but as a horticultural, not an agricultural, showplace. ("I am pleased to say," she says, "I am not personally responsible any longer for a single cow. The Park Service keeps some around to give atmosphere for the tourists.") A 15-acre tract has been experimentally seeded with wildflowers, whose germination and growth are monitored by Mrs. Johnson and her botanical consultants. Elsewhere between the sprawling ranch house and river there are free-born beds of Indian blankets, primroses, winecups and bluebonnets. At least in the spring of the year the virtues and purposes of these wild beauties are self-evident. So, without pausing, Mrs. Johnson leads a visitor to a less gaudy, but she thinks interesting, botanical point of interest—a small twisted tree, a Mexican persimmon, growing just outside the kitchen door.

This species is common in central Texas but has never been much regarded, having an inconspicuous bloom, sparse foliage and very indifferent fruit. "I have known these all my life," Mrs. Johnson says of the persimmons, "and liked them because of their shape." (When attention is called to it, the tree does have an interesting, gnarly growth habit like a large bonsai or organic metal sculpture.) "We didn't have any here at the ranch but there were many on a piece of property we owned elsewhere. One day—oh my, 20 years or more ago—I got one of the men to go with me to the other place. We dug and tugged this little tree out of the ground and brought it here. I think the ranch hands laughed at us, working so hard on such an ordinary, scrubby thing, but it gives me pleasure to look at and think about each time I pass it."

"I'm not always opposed to development"

As to her evolution from an admirer and sometime collector of native species to their most prominent public advocate, Mrs. Johnson says, "I reached my 70th birthday four years ago and had the feeling, as the saying goes here, that the crops were in the barn. I'd done about everything I could do for Lyndon. [For the previous decade Mrs. Johnson had been much and regularly involved with the Lyndon Johnson Library and School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas.] I decided I wanted to do something all my own. During my life I had seen new residential communities, shopping centers, spaghetti networks of highways cover over what had once been fields of wildflowers. I am not always, everywhere, opposed to development, but it seemed that if we did not make a conscious effort, as we built, to preserve and make use of our native

One of NWRC's main priorities is public awareness and education. Children from Forest Trail Elementary School near Austin tour plots of Indian blanket used in research on how sowing methods affect germination.

plants, we and our descendants would lose the beauty and the sense of our natural heritage which they provide. So I thought I might help to establish a center which would encourage people to incorporate wildflowers into the development grid, distribute information about how this can be done, call attention to how practical—for example, as a means of saving water—it is to landscape with native species. I had the notion that in this way I might give back something to the country I've loved—pay my rent, so to speak, for the space I've taken up and the good times I've had."

In 1982 Mrs. Johnson invited some well-known and well-heeled friends to join her in establishing the National Wildflower Research Center. (Helen Hayes serves as a co-chairperson of the organization, and among others, the Laurance Rockefellers are trustees.) To get things started, Mrs. Johnson donated 60 acres of land outside Austin as a home for the center and $125,000 to commence building facilities and hiring a staff. Since then she has remained one of the most important patrons of the center, among other things contributing about $20,000 a year she receives as honorariums from speaking to groups across the nation about floral, political and other subjects.

Administratively, the Wildflower Center has grown rapidly and vigorously. It now has a permanent endowment of more than a million dollars, a paid staff of 14 persons and an annual operating budget of about $800,000. The center is national only in the generic sense, since it is not chartered by and does not receive funds from the federal government. Also, while three energetic young women are employed as resource and research botanists, their work mainly has to do with applied horticulture rather than conventional research. In a small greenhouse and some adjacent field plots they are growing wildflowers, taking notes on and having photographs made of the various seedling stages. Eventually this information will be compiled in a guide for use by highway-maintenance and other people who want to know what a wildflower looks like before it blooms so that it will not be cut or poisoned.

Another project involves monitoring commercial wildflower-seed packs—their contents and germination rates. "There are no standards about advertising or what goes into these mixes, and frankly some of them are rather poor," says David Northington. "Down the line we may become involved in trying to get some national standards, but we have no intention

of becoming a Ralph Nader type of organization exposing the deficiencies of Brand X. Our approach is positive. If people request information, we give them what we consider to be a good seed formula for their area. The hope is that they will compare this against what is in a commercial mix and buy accordingly, but it is up to them."

Much of the routine work of the resource botanists involves answering such requests (more than 23,000 of them in 1986 alone) for wildflower information. Many of the writers or callers want to know where to get plants or seeds, and in response the center sends names of suppliers—a directory has been compiled for each state. When the questions are larger or more complicated (say, from a highway department considering mass plantings), the center will give direct advice, search the appropriate literature or try to put the parties in touch with other horticulturists at local universities or herbariums.

Texas Highway Department

Indian paintbrush and other native plants growing by freeways supply low-maintenance erosion protection.

David Northington is the only fully accredited botanist, having previously been a professor of the subject at Texas Tech and the co-author of a well-regarded, undergraduate textbook. He says he left academia because he thought directing the Wildflower Center would be more challenging, socially significant work. He seems very well suited for it, being an articulate, witty man and a graceful popular writer on wildflower subjects. By report he does very well as a resource person at trustee meetings, black-tie fund raisers and as a speaker on the garden-club circuit.

Research on wildflowers is scant

Northington says that when the center is older and better established, the plan is for it to become more involved than it is now in basic botanical research. He thinks there is great need for this since, of the roughly 20,000 species of native flowering plants, only a few have been seriously studied in terms of their life cycles, ecological needs and impact, cellular and chemical properties. Beyond knowledge for knowledge's sake, he believes that more research in these areas will almost inevitably be rewarding for gardeners, agriculturists and health professionals. Nevertheless, Northington believes that the central work of the center will and should be as Mrs. Johnson envisioned it—to promote the horticulture and conservation of native species and provide information about how these goals can be accomplished.

In this regard the thrust of the center and that of the new wildflower movement in general is quite different from that of the traditional native-plant societies that have long been organized in most states. Kate McKinney, one of the center's staff botanists, grew up and attended college in California where she was chummy with old-line native-plant people. "Maybe it just reflects the new popularity of wildflowers or just differences in regional culture," she says, "but the people I knew in California only wanted to find interesting species and make sure they were not disturbed. Here in Texas, when people see an attractive flower they think of how it can be protected as well as how they can use it for landscaping."

The fear has sometimes been expressed that all the recent publicity about the beauty and utility of native species may inspire well-meaning but destructive hordes of new fanciers to rush out, dig up and generally play havoc with natural plant communities. To nip such tendencies in the bud, a continuing theme in

the information distributed by the Wildflower Center is that it is not desirable or practical for gardeners to collect their own specimens; that their first stock should be obtained from reputable growers who propagate and distribute native plants raised from seeds, divisions or cuttings.

David Northington thinks that such warnings and, if necessary, additional regulations to protect rare plants from misguided or rapacious collectors are worthwhile but that, generally, wildflower gardening will not put undue pressure on wildflowers. He points out that almost by definition species most attractive for horticulture—and therefore the most marketable—are abundant, hardy, adaptable ones, not scarce, delicate plants that survive only in small, highly specialized environmental niches.

"Looking ahead—ten years into the future? What would I like to see?" Northington repeats a question asked of him. "Obviously a lot more native species being used along highways where they are attractive and practical. There is another thing that may sound odd but I think it is central to all of this. I'd like to see us using many more wildflower plantings and a lot less turf in parks as well as on any other public grounds."

Northington says he has been accused of being an anti-grass zealot but that he really is only against excessive grass. "We have lacked confidence in our taste and, in a sense, in our own flora. We need to break with some of the old, fairly ridiculous fashions, such as trying to turn every backyard or park into an English formal garden. One of the things we're doing here at the center is helping people to discover that it makes ecological sense and is esthetically challenging to use native species and create settings for them that reflect the natural realities of our land rather than those of England, Italy or Japan."

If the current interest in native species commenced as a fad, a way of describing the National Wildflower Research Center might be that it is an outfit working hard to make this fad a permanent one. Or to put it Lady Bird Johnson's way, "For my seven grandchildren and everybody else's, I believe we can keep our heritage of wildflowers alive in our public and private landscapes." This would seem, in a manner of speaking, to be a wildflower of an ambition; that is, one that cannot be faulted.

NWRC founder Lady Bird Johnson relaxes among drummond phlox, other Texas flora in garden at LBJ Ranch. Promoting public appreciation of wildflowers, she says, is her way of paying her rent to the world.

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Canada

The World Next Door

By Michael Webb

A man who made architecture an art of the unexpected

It's hard to know what Frank Gehry will come up with next but you can count on its being different, imaginative, useful and even joyous

Frank Gehry is very fond of fish. As a boy growing up in a Polish-Jewish home in Toronto, he remembers playing with the live carp that his grandmother bought every Thursday to make gefilte fish for the Sabbath. He has introduced fish as a note of whimsy in his concept sketches: as a support for an imaginary suspension bridge across New York City, or as a hotel in Kalamazoo. His fish lamps are sought by collectors, and his scaly metal crocodiles are suspended from the ceiling of Rebecca's, a restaurant he designed in Venice, California, a few blocks from his beachfront office.

Now, his fantasies have been fully realized—or exorcized—in a restrospective exhibition, which was organized by Mildred Friedman at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. The show was seen in Houston and will next appear in Toronto at the Art Museum at Harbour Front (August 28 through October 14) before going to the High Museum of Art in Atlanta (November 21, 1987, through January 9, 1988) and Los Angeles' Museum of Contemporary Art (February 9, 1988, through May 18). Sketches, models and photographs are displayed in and around walk-through structures that were created by Gehry to express his ideas on design. The first of these is a lead-scaled, wood-ribbed fish, illuminated by fish and snake lamps —a cross between an enchanted cave and a whale's body. Gehry's cardboard furniture is housed in a cutaway room of laminated cardboard; stairs are canopied by a forest of plywood box beams. Architectural models are contained within wood-frame enclosures faced in sheet metal and polished plywood. It's a tactile experience, comparable to walking through a Gehry building. A 22-foot-high glass-scaled fish was the star of the show in Minneapolis.

Long disparaged as a Southern California eccentric, Gehry seems finally to be winning acceptance nationwide. Philip Johnson, doyen of American architects and a man of very different tastes, is a fervent admirer. "Frank is unique in his passion for using strange shapes and giving you a gut reaction that no one else succeeds in doing. His buildings are shocking but they give you a mysterious feeling of delight."

Ironically, the architect whose present acclaim rests on his innovative houses and museums, law school and public library, began his career as a city planner with Victor Gruen Associates, which specialized in shopping centers (SMITHSONIAN, December 1986). He went on to design department-store interiors, then offices and malls for the Rouse Company. But even as he was earning his bread and butter from conventional assignments, an artist was struggling to break through.

Gehry wasn't cut out to wear a tie. "I've always been drawn to the tough side of life," he observes. "It's something I grew up with. My father began life as a street urchin in New York's Hell's Kitchen. In Toronto, he sold slot machines, and I remember going the rounds with him, to bars and carnivals. It was legal then, but you saw guns . . . there was always a sense of being on the wrong side of the tracks. But my mother took me to concerts and introduced me to art, so there was a balance."

Propelled from wood shavings to architecture

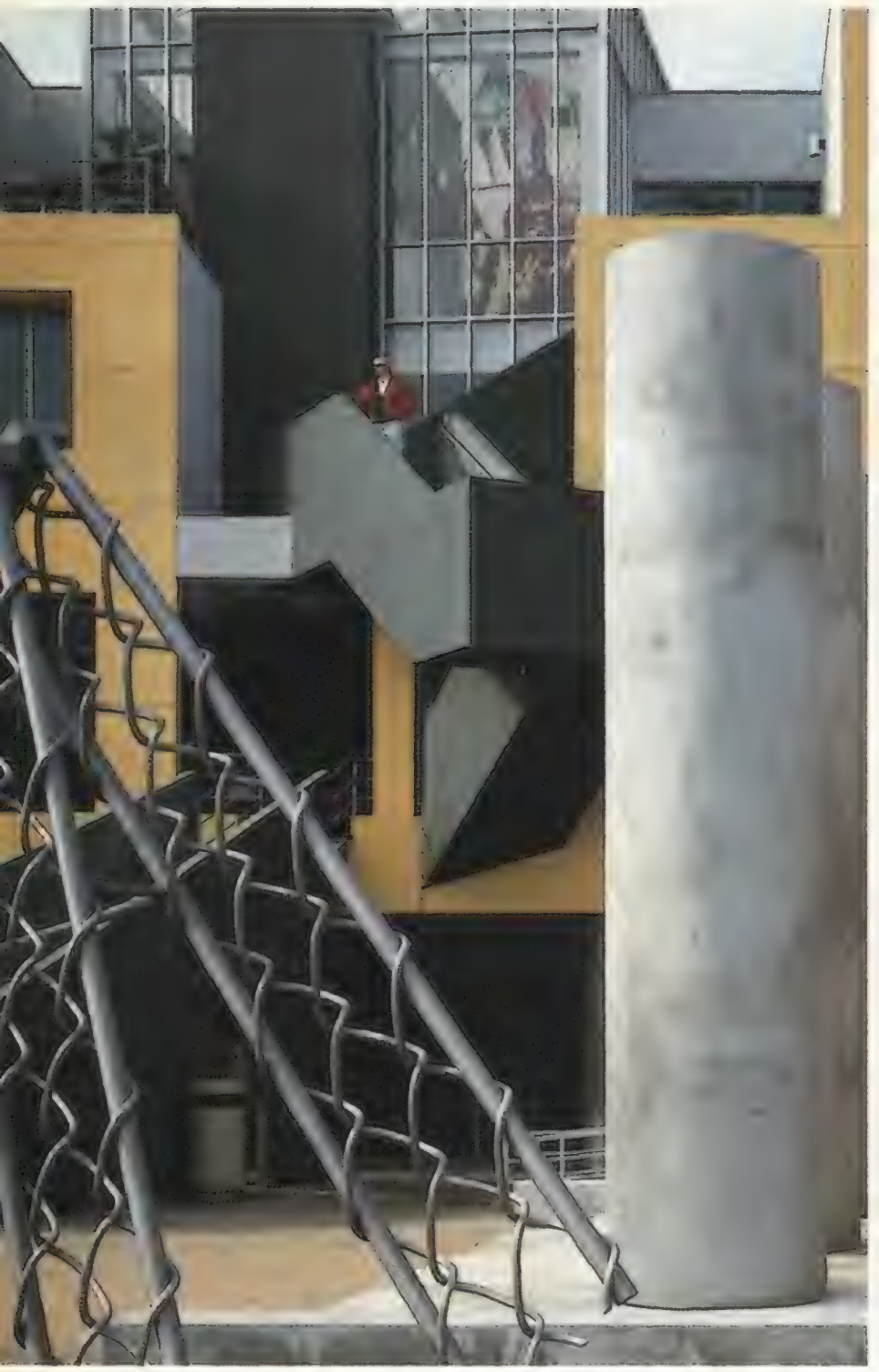
When his family moved from Toronto to Los Angeles in 1947, his first job was driving a truck to pay for night classes in art. He was propelled into the University of Southern California architecture school by a childhood memory of building cities from wood shavings, scavenged from his grandfather's hardware store. He spent a year at the Harvard Graduate School of Design studying city planning and another in Paris, from where he trekked off to see modern and historical masterpieces. "My big discovery was the Romanesque cathedrals," he recalls, "so muscular and unadorned." After a few years of working with established architects, he set up his own office in Santa Monica in 1962, moving to Venice 20 years later.

It was an inspired move, for Venice has become a base for some of the liveliest young artists in the United States. Gehry drank and played poker with such neighbors as Robert Irwin, Billy Al Bengston, Ed Moses, Ron Davis and Chuck Arnoldi.

What Gehry valued, beyond the friendship, was the inspiration. "I'm fascinated by the problem of con-

Photographs by Roger Ressmeyer

At age 58, as boyish as ever, Gehry is comfortably enthroned in one of his Experimental Edges chairs, a line of furniture he designed, made of laminated corrugated cardboard. Behind, one of his fish lamps.



Gehry fit a small-scale campus for Loyola's Law School into single block just west of downtown Los Angeles.

fronting a white canvas," he declares. "It's got to be like jumping off a cliff. I grew up in L.A. when there weren't any architects taking risks, so I may invest in painters more power than they really have. When I feel stuck in my work, I always go to paintings."

Most architects' offices are showcases of style; many are furnished like those of the corporate clients they are intended to attract. Gehry's has a rough door in a plain wall, and beyond the tiny lobby is a warehouse in a state of apparent confusion. Ragged or unfinished models are stacked on every available surface.

Gehry's desk, cut from a block of cardboard sheets, is in full view of his 30 young associates. He proceeds by indirection. "Anything to delay starting. I'll sweep up, clean the floor. I must have a model of the site and all the specifics about the job and the building code. While this material is assembled, I start fantasizing and sketching. Quite often, one of the first rough sketches is very close to the final plan."

Gehry is a bundle of contradictions. He needs collaborators and pays serious attention to his colleagues and even his clients. But he insists that he cannot verbalize design problems and has to work them out in his own head. Rumpled and soft-spoken, he is obsessed with getting every job just right, no matter how long it takes. He is haunted by the fear that his current success is ephemeral, that a growing list of commissions will suddenly evaporate.

A vacation, but too late to book

He frets that his work is shutting out his other interests, joking nervously about the hold his buildings have on him. "I've earned a year's paid vacation, because I never take time off. Finally, I'm going with the family on a skiing trip—but I've left it too late to book and everything is full. He looks around with an expression of mock despair.

Listening to this shy, self-deprecating man, with his wry sense of humor, recalls a Woody Allen monologue. As the only Jew at his school in Toronto he was taunted, and occasionally beaten up, by other kids. "So, in a weak moment, at the urging of my first wife, I changed my name from Goldberg to Gehry—and now I regret it. Not that religion means anything to me, but I value my roots. Now I'm married to a Catholic [Panamanian-born Berta Isabel Aguilera] and I find that going to mass gives me the same feeling of satisfaction I had as a kid attending synagogue."

Gehry shares with Allen a love of New York. "I've thought of moving there," he muses. "I love the intensity of the information that comes to you there, dropping in on friends and catching the latest art shows. I could be a part of that—but I can't imagine myself working there, so I don't know how I'd sur-

vive." In the meantime, Gehry amuses himself by sailing in Santa Monica Bay, attending concerts and reading Japanese novels in translation. "Japan, and especially Tokyo, is a very special place for me," he reflects. "The juxtaposition of houses and high-rises, the illusion of chaos and the way that everything is just a bit smaller than here, are very appealing."

Abruptly, his conversation returns home. "After college I campaigned for liberal politicians. As a city planner, I wanted to change the world. But I soon discovered how little power I had in that role, and how the architecture gets thrown out. So I decided to concentrate on things that could have an impact. The little jewel—a one-family house, for example—can be a powerful instrument for ideas, and get attention."

The first of these jewels, which Gehry himself considers to be significant, was the 1964 house-studio in Hollywood for graphic designer Lou Danziger. The two spaces are housed in blank-walled stucco boxes, linked by a wall that encloses a tiny garden, and lit from skylights and from north-facing windows to exclude the noise of traffic on busy Melrose Avenue. At first glance, the architecture is invisible; Los Angeles is full of such windowless commercial structures. In fact, like so much of Gehry's work, it solves the practical problems of noise, light and privacy on a shoestring budget, while investing mundane forms and materials with a sense of poetry.

A close look reveals the subtleties. The base is recessed, so that the three blank walls, animated by shadows, seem to be floating past each other. The double-height studio and living room have a harmony of proportion and a purity of line that Danziger still finds deeply rewarding after 20 years of intensive use.

A strategy of breaking up space

In 1968, Gehry went much further, using raw plywood, corrugated metal and exposed wood studs to create intimate enclosures for an exhibition of paintings by Billy Al Bengston at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Gehry has since become well known for these materials and this strategy of breaking up space, but this was the first time and the museum staff fought him all the way. The setting, which included objects and furniture, evoked the aggressive imagery of motorcycle racing that inspired Bengston.

Artists influenced Gehry's work at the formative stage. Robert Irwin's use of cotton scrim to create shadow structures, Bengston's fondness for dented sheet metal, and Donald Judd's metal boxes all served as "valuable points of departure . . . news from the front line," as Gehry recalls. To these diverse examples, the architect adds his obsession with process and texture. "Most frame buildings look great under construction," he maintains, "but when they're covered they look like hell."

Context is another important factor. Whether it's the expectation of a devastating earthquake, the example of movie sets or the random effect of economic opportunity, much of Los Angeles (and especially Venice) is unplanned and has an air of impermanence. Houses and stores are jammed up against landmarks; industrial structures and warehouses are everywhere. Gehry's buildings play off the visual chaos. Three recent museums show how effective this approach can be.

The Cabrillo Marine Museum is located beside a state beach in San Pedro, but the natural beauty of the site has been compromised by refineries and storage tanks, cranes and docks. The old building was a charm-

Henry Bowles

Commissioned house in Venice overlooking the ocean has study reflecting owner's previous lifeguard duty.

Samuel Goldwyn jr. donated funds for the Frances Howard Goldwyn Library in Hollywood in memory of his mother, asking only that it be something she would have been proud of and that it be dignified.

City officials, mindful that previous library had been torched, asked for security. Gehry satisfied both.

ing adobe with a red-tiled roof, a romantic echo of the Spanish past. Gehry's solution is tougher and more versatile. He has created a villagelike cluster of separate buildings for the displays, auditorium, classrooms and services—cheaper than putting them all into one large block—and has tied them together with a dramatically angled superstructure of chain link. This device also provides security, a hook for outdoor exhibits and instant recognition for the institution. Literal-minded adults have been known to mistake the museum for a prison or an aviary; for the kids who constitute its primary audience, chain link suggests a playground. At the opening, Mayor Bradley marveled that so much had been achieved for $3 million.

For about the same amount, Gehry created the California Aerospace Museum in Los Angeles' Exposition Park. It houses a collection of planes and related exhibits, serves as an entrance to the large brick Armory that will later be rehabilitated as the main display area, and it works as a three-dimensional billboard to win public and corporate support. Volumes that suggest space-assembly buildings, hangars and radomes collide with "a touching awkwardness," as the architect puts it, "like the city buildings butting up to each other." Pinned to the facade is an F104 Starfighter.

The Temporary Contemporary came along by chance. Construction of Los Angeles' Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) had been delayed two years, and to maintain the momentum of fund raising an interim display space was urgently needed. In 1982, the city offered a 55,000-square-foot police garage in the Little Tokyo district at a token rent, if MOCA would pay for its conversion. Gehry had been passed over, in favor of Japanese architect Arata Isozaki, in the competition for the design of the permanent building. The loss rankled, and Gehry determined he would show everyone what he could do, on a fraction of what Isozaki had to spend.

The job was a labor of love. "Most artists' work looks better in their studios, because museums are too confined," says Gehry. "They traditionally take old warehouses and make studios out of them." He followed their example, creating flexible galleries for contemporary art by preserving the character of the original structure. There was almost no money left once the building had been brought up to Los Angeles' stringent earthquake code and new lighting had been installed. Since the surrounding buildings on the dead-end street were scheduled for demolition, which would leave the Temporary stranded like a supermarket in a parking lot, Gehry allowed himself one piece

Michael Webb, Los Angeles art consultant, was the curator for the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service's Hollywood: Legend and Reality.

Two dictates of California Aerospace Museum were a tight budget and a visual symbol of the industry.

Cabrillo Marine Museum, San Pedro, is a cluster of buildings canopied by a chain-link superstructure.

of architecture: a steel-framed chain-link canopy over the street that "established a territory, and gave the building substance from the outside."

MOCA director Richard Koshalek has high praise for this restraint: "Frank understands space; many architects don't. Whenever I introduced him to visitors, he said 'I'm just the janitor, I cleaned the place up.' In fact he engineered the space with great sensitivity. He uses common materials like an artist, with elegance, taking architecture out of the commercial, problem-solving world and raising it to a higher level."

None of Gehry's projects has had a greater impact than his home in Santa Monica. He took what he described as "a dumb little house with charm," a two-story, pink-shingled cottage on a shaded suburban street, and decided "to build a new house around the old and try to maintain a tension between the two, by having the one define the other." He stripped the old interior to its original wood frame, but left the exterior intact and surrounded it with a carapace of glass, plywood, corrugated metal and chain link.

When his neighbors protested what they regarded as an eyesore, he pointed out that their backyards were enclosed with chain link, and that the boats and campers parked in their front drives used industrial materials. One night a shot was fired at the house, but Gehry declined to take this as hostile criticism when he learned that less remarkable houses in the area had also been shot at. The house became a mecca for students of architecture from around the world. "I wish we had sold popcorn," muses the architect.

Gehry intended it as a "research and development" project, a sketchbook for future projects. Several corporate clients took it too literally, and business fell off for several years. Gehry accepted an architectural award with a lecture entitled "I'm Not Weird"—assuring his critics that he was as capable of solving problems, meeting schedules and budgets as any architect. Even friends and artists were initially hesitant, wondering if he would give them more than they had bargained for, but most seem satisfied with what they got and how much was accomplished for the cost.

Tight budgets make clients active collaborators. Jane Spiller had a 90-by-30-foot plot on a side street in Venice, on which she wanted to build a house for herself and a detached rental unit, with separate entrances and gardens, plus parking for four cars. To save money she asked Gehry to do the conceptual design, while she supervised the construction. Between them, they created distinctive towers, flooded with light. Each is metal-clad but has a woodsy interior, much of which was improvised by the carpenters.

Says Spiller: "Frank thought that because I had worked in Charles and Ray Eames's office, I must be a perfectionist. In fact, my own taste was different from the Eameses'; I had lived before this in a converted squash court." For Gehry, the trick is "to design with the limitations of spec builders in mind, when you cannot afford to pay for fine craftsmanship. You give them the responsibility of doing their best work, and by leaving it exposed you don't give them the opportunity to cover up their mistakes." The Spiller house is full of classic Eames furniture, which sits very well with the unfinished-wood walls and open staircase.

A few blocks south, overlooking the ocean, Gehry performed another balancing act on a ridiculously small site and budget. To remodel and enlarge Lyn and Bill Norton's cottage, he broke the project into as many separate elements as possible. "It allows the client more involvement, because you can say, 'Well, I've got ten images now that are going to compose your house.' " One of these images is an entrance arch of

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unfinished logs, a torii to remind Lyn of her Japanese roots. Another is Bill's detached study, a paraphrase of the beach shelters below to recall his experience as a lifeguard (p. 51). The rest of the house offers a succession of useful spaces; privacy and an unimpeded view of the ocean; and the special flavor of Venice.

Artist Miriam Wosk bought a four-story apartment building in Beverly Hills. She envisaged remodeling the top floor as an apartment and studio; instead, Gehry replaced it with a penthouse, set back behind a terrace. This connects with a remodeled third floor to create a spacious duplex, each room flowing into the next. She had shown the architect photos of her favorite building styles—the Taj Mahal, Hollywood art deco, extravaganzas by Antonio Gaudí—hoping he could incorporate a couple of these ideas. Instead, "Frank captured all of my fantasies . . . we did a harmonious dance together." The penthouse includes a gold ziggurat, a blue dome, a black marble arch and a metal-surfaced studio. Amazingly, these elements cohere with Wosk's furnishings. From below it looks like a surreal hill village.

Throughout his career, Gehry has played variations on a few distinctive themes. He made furniture from cardboard during his military service. In 1972, he was inspired by the stacked cardboard of site-contour models to create Easy Edges, chairs and tables that were fun to look at, easy to mass-produce, light and strong. Buyers were enthusiastic, but Gehry soon withdrew the line, claiming that he didn't want to spend his time as a star designer fronting for a commercial product.

In the late 1970s, he created Experimental Edges, which have been described as shaggy cartoons of conventional armchairs. Like his lamps made from shards of colored formica, these chairs are sold to collectors as sculptures rather than as furniture. Claims Gehry: "The reason I do furniture and lamps and exhibitions is because it's like fast food. It's quick nourishment . . . it's built, it's done."

Another recurring theme is his collaboration with artists, notably sculptor Claes Oldenburg. Of all his unrealized projects, the one he most regrets is "Camp Good Times," a joint proposal with Oldenburg and his wife, Coosje van Bruggen. The goal was to achieve a practical but entertaining environment for children with terminal cancer, on a rugged site in the Santa Monica Mountains. Gehry has demonstrated a special rapport with children in the classes he has given with his sister Doreen to stimulate fresh thinking about city planning (SMITHSONIAN, May 1971) .

The team created a fantasy world that avoided the picture-book nostalgia of Disneyland and appealed directly to a child's imagination and sense of play. The source for the imagery was the ocean, which could be glimpsed from the site. An upturned-boat form served as a sheltering porch roof, the dining hall suggested petrified waves, the infirmary was topped with sails. The camp director, a doctor, a landscape architect and a conservationist served as advisors. Their proposal was rejected at the urging of a Board member who be-

Two crocodiles inhabit Rebecca's, a 160-seat Mexican restaurant that is cynosure of Venice, California.

Living room of Spiller house; a home for her, a detached rental unit and parking area for four cars.

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Chad Slattery

The house Gehry designed and lives in, Santa Monica, created consternation, became a mecca for students.

Gehry and associates build careful, detailed models for work in progress, as here; then brainstorm.

lieved that log cabins in the tradition of "Huckleberry Finn" would be more appropriate for sick children.

In the Camp Good Times plan, as in so many of Gehry's houses, the building program is fragmented, giving each activity its own distinctive shell. The spaces between these units are even more important in the total design than the interiors and surfaces. The most successful of these village structures is Loyola Law School, just west of downtown Los Angeles. Loyola was a commuter school, with a thousand students attending lectures in a single block in a drab neighborhood. Gehry gave them a sense of place and the dignity of the legal tradition.

Inspired by the University of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson's "academical village," he created a campus on the confined site, and arranged a sequence of small buildings along its spine. This courtyard is enclosed by a long, four-story office/classroom block, a library created from the original school, and a parking garage. The long block is faced in bright ochre and is penetrated by a foreshortened staircase and a glass gable. Stylized columns and pediments evoke classical courthouses. Since this is a Jesuit foundation, there is a chapel, Romanesque in form and constructed from polished plywood. The new campus has generated a sense of community and lively interchange among students and faculty.

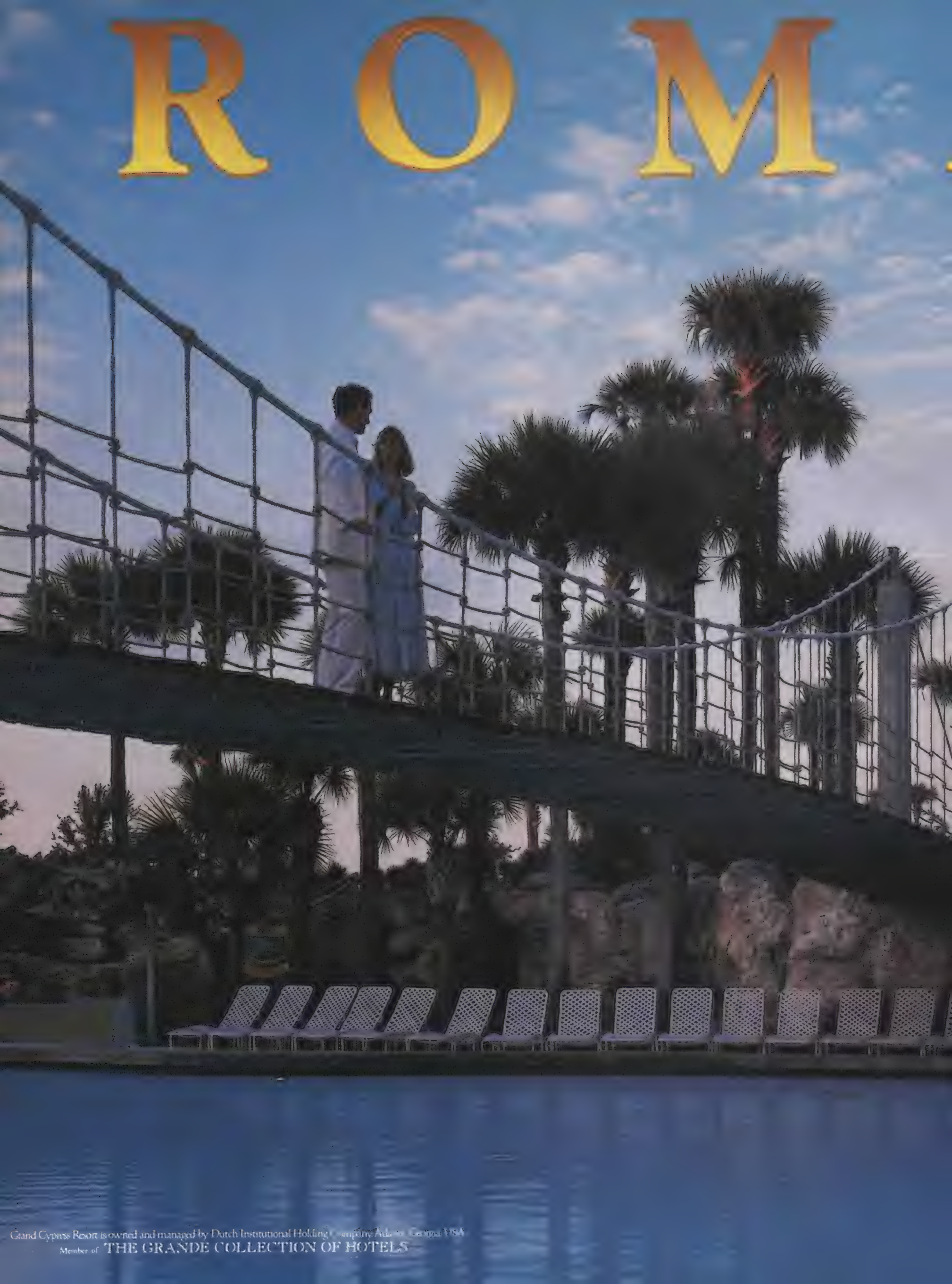
Gehry is currently riding high. On the boards are large-scale housing projects for what he calls "very enlightened developers" in Boston, Cleveland and Dallas. Major artworks will be an integral part of the developments. There's a factory for Herman Miller in Sacramento, and the Yale Psychiatric Institute, another variation on the urban village theme. Back in Venice, Oldenburg is a collaborator on the Chiat/Day advertising agency, a building with an entrance arch in the form of a giant pair of binoculars, flanked by stylized trees and a ship's bridge. The spirit of Camp Good Times is alive and well.

Despite this upturn, he is tormented by insecurities. "I would mentally duck when I presented plans to a client," he reflects. "Now I make a finished presentation and I get applause. I've been wondering about that. The Walker exhibition is probably rattling the cage a bit. I won't be surprised if I lose all my clients and have to start over again."

Richard Koshalek sees it differently: "Frank is always going to be ahead of the world. If he thinks it's catching up with him, he's going to leap forward or step aside to get out of the way."

Fascinated by fish, Gehry has used them in numerous ways. This fish lamp is an inspired eyecatcher.

D. James Dee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Free-lance photographer works the area around Hoan Kiem Lake in Hanoi, Vietnam's drab capital.

By Lewis M. Simons

With new energy, Vietnam gets down to business

Ironically, the Hanoi regime in the north is trying capitalism to spur the sagging economy; with the south's know-how, it may work

He picks up business from courting couples and other strollers, an activity permitted by the government.

Van Thi Dung ran her eyes and fingers professionally over the workmanship of the simple white cotton blouse and, with a little grunt, pronounced it satisfactory. Then she peeled 350 dong off a substantial wad of grimy bills she extracted from a beige plastic shoulder bag and handed over the money to the clerk. The fact that the blouse cost fully a third of her monthly salary seemed not to faze her at all.

"I make 1,000 dong a month as a weaver in a cloth factory," she told me above the raucous din of Hanoi's dank, cavernous Dong Xuan market. "But my salary doesn't really mean anything anymore. By working harder and producing more cloth I can earn many times my salary. It's up to me. So, I don't consider this blouse expensive."

Across the aisle, Dang Minh Nguyet was selling Unification brand bicycles. The clunky-looking machines—the same two-wheelers on which Communist soldiers rolled thousands of tons of material down the Ho Chi Minh Trail to use against American and South Vietnamese troops—were selling for about 7,000 dong. That's more than half a year's official pay for most Vietnamese. Even though the bikes were fresh out of the government-run factory, they looked old and shabby, the olive-drab paint flaking off, the handlebars rusting. But that didn't hold back sales. "We sell about 70 of these bicycles in a week," said saleswoman Nguyet. "People can afford them because they have additional income. I myself raise pigs which I sell on the free market, and I have part-time jobs."

Moonlighting is now encouraged

As I traveled throughout Vietnam, from the China border in the north to Ho Chi Minh City in the south, in cities and on cooperative farms, people told much the same story. Incentives and moonlighting, forbidden by the stridently Marxist Hanoi regime until just a few years ago, are not only tolerated, they're now officially encouraged. So are private businesses. State shops, like the one selling bikes, and privately owned ones, like that where Dung bought her blouse, often operate cheek by jowl. Capitalists, one of the dirtiest words in the Vietnamese Communist lexicon, are coming out of the closet. Privately owned factories have permission to operate, as long as they don't employ more than 15 workers. Owners are heavily taxed, but several told me it was worth their while.

In the countryside, where the overwhelming majority of Vietnamese live and labor to the same rhythms that have paced their culture since the mists of time, responsibility for production on farming cooperatives is being divided up among families; the more people, the larger the piece of land. Families contract directly with the state to deliver their quotas of rice and other crops. Whatever additional they can produce is theirs to do with as they like, essentially to sell on the open, or free, market. The cash they earn is leading to a slowly but unmistakably improved standard of living. Small tractors, bicycles and scooters, treadle-operated sewing machines and televisions are gradually becoming more commonplace in peasants' homes, particularly in the south. And a stunning number of those houses are new, as attested by the

Photographs by Christopher Pillitz

Roving street vendor in Hanoi hawks eyeglasses; such goods are often smuggled into the country.

year of construction molded into a plaque above the door of each small brick-and-tile structure.

Many Vietnamese are divided over the long-term future of private enterprise. Some believe that it's counterrevolutionary and wonder why they shed blood and tears only to see entrepreneurs moving back into positions of relative wealth; others see the private sector as the only avenue to a better life. But few argue that there was another way. Several years ago, almost a decade after the Communists swept to power, the economy was stagnant. One of Asia's great rice bowls, Vietnam couldn't feed itself. It was one of the poorest countries in the world. Then the party's leaders, pressed by Chairman of the State Planning Commission Vo Van Kiet, acknowledged that China, their giant Communist neighbor—and enemy—had set off down the much-maligned capitalist road and was doing very well, indeed. Envy gave rise to pragmatism and change slowly set in.

Although it now meets its own food requirements, Vietnam is still painfully poor, far behind China on the capitalist road and even farther behind its non-Communist neighbors in Southeast Asia. And it's almost certain to drag behind until Western aid—particularly U.S. aid—starts pouring in. Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach and other senior leaders told me, and continue to tell almost anyone who'll listen, that they'd love to have American investment and American expertise at work in their country. But they're also aware that they can't expect any change in U.S. policy; that Vietnam is still an open wound to millions of Americans and that there is no political benefit to a U.S. President in probing that wound.

Thus, forced to rely almost entirely on the Soviet Union for both economic and military aid, the Vietnamese had to look elsewhere for inspiration. While their hatred for China gets in the way of giving credit where it's due, Beijing's example under Deng Xiaoping provided the model. "No one in the party will acknowledge it officially," a middle-ranking bureaucrat confided to me during a quiet lunch in Hanoi, "but the inspiration for this change came from China. Our leaders saw that what was happening there was good for China and decided it would be good for us."

The streets of Ho Chi Minh City are a scrimmage of people rushing about on bikes and other vehicles.

The change set off ideological tensions that directly reflected the growing differences between the old-line Marxists, who first went to war against the French

The author, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, is based in Tokyo. His book on the Philippine revolution, Worth Dying For, *is due out in August.*

The woman riding in the motorized ricksha (center) is probably a trader taking jerricans to her shop.

Artist puts final touches on portrait of Michael Jackson in small Hanoi shop that serves local folks.

colonialists, spent more than 40 years in bloody struggle and knew only sacrifice, and the younger generation, who wanted a little pleasure out of life. Not that the younger Vietnamese are any less committed to Communism than their elders; they most certainly are not. But neither are they willing to go on sacrificing endlessly with no promise of relief—of more living space, better clothes, more food, some entertainment. (Now, after the major government reshuffle in February, the old-line Marxists are in the distinct minority, with reformers and technocrats elevated to new power.)

The drabness of Vietnamese life, particularly in Hanoi, strikes the foreign visitor immediately. In Asia, only Rangoon, the moribund capital of socialist Burma, is as gloomy; its graceful colonial-era buildings as green with moss, its avenues and boulevards as eerily silent for want of motor traffic, its shops as dusty and dreary. Visitors to both cities are likewise struck by the hunger, the fascination, particularly among the young, for anything Western. In a small café on the bank of Hoan Kiem Lake, in the center of Hanoi, groups of teenage boys with near-shoulder-length hair and sunglasses and girls in flared trousers and spike-heeled sandals frequently cluster around a huge Japanese tape recorder. When I visited there, the machine was blasting a seven-year-old album by the Swedish rock group ABBA. The young people knew all the lyrics by heart and were singing along, swaying with the beat. One daring youth in blue jeans smiled broadly and flashed the thumbs-up sign, but turned away abruptly when I attempted to ask a question. Conversations with foreigners are "discouraged" by the regime. But the youths' actions spoke for themselves.

My luncheon companion, a man in his mid-30s, expressed the evolving values of younger Vietnamese eloquently: "Everything I am today I owe to the party. My parents were poor peasants who farmed near the port of Haiphong. My father was killed by the French when I was still an infant. My mother died of malaria when I was nine years old. For a while I worked as a buffalo boy. Then the party sent me to school. I worked hard and I was able to go through high school and university. I fought in the war against the Americans, on the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and after the liberation of the south I returned to Hanoi."

As is not uncommon for veterans of any war in any country, he returned home with high hopes. His stunted height and boy's build—common in a country where malnutrition is widespread—were testimony to the hard life he'd led. But his penetrating eyes shone with determination. While he asked not to be identi-

Workers in government-run rug factory earn about 500 dong a month—equal to U.S. $1 on black market.

To supplement meager wages, many moonlight with enterprises such as growing produce or vending goods.

fied too closely, he holds a responsible government position and his seniors say his future is promising. But he and his wife, who works in a government radio factory, want more, and they want it now. The shift in economic policy has given them the opportunity.

"Our salaries are just about enough to provide us with the bare necessities," he said. "In order to have anything extra, we raise chickens, pigs and Alsatian puppies and grow apples. In addition, I teach English and do translations. This earned us 100,000 dong last year. With this we've been able to buy a bicycle and a Czech-made motor scooter. In 1980, we bought a little house outside Hanoi for 30,000 dong. But, with our new income, I've improved it and today it's probably worth a million dong. We can buy clothing for ourselves and our three children and, last year, I took them to this restaurant. The bill came to nearly 300 dong."

The restaurant, known simply as the Restaurant for Special Food, is located at 3 Dien Bien Street, and is as inauspicious as most of grimy, gritty Hanoi. The "special food" is prepared in the open-roofed entryway, where squatting women dismember frogs, skin eels, dissect pigeons and slice generous beefsteaks, which are served sizzling on black iron platters shaped like fat steers. On the cool, drizzly day my acquaintance and I were there, the place was full. Seated on benches around the eight oilcloth-covered tables, strategically placed to avoid leaks in the roof, were five groups of Vietnamese and three of foreign diplomats. Everyone was eating to his heart's content, washing down the excellent food with tart but well-chilled Bia Hanoi. The owner, looking terribly French in blue beret and scarf over a gray smock, smiled benignly as he inquired about his customers' dining satisfaction. And well he might smile, my companion whispered: "He makes so much money he pays the government 100,000 dong a month in taxes."

All this talk of income, restaurants, motorbikes and clothes is disquieting to purists among the party elders. A retired civil servant with whom I toured the old imperial capital of Hue (SMITHSONIAN, June 1986) snorted with derision at the hawkers tending their private stalls at the city's central market. "This will be phased out in a few years," he predicted. "This is not the socialist system. These people don't produce anything. They just use money to make money. We

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allow it for now in the service of the country because they're needed—they know how to find goods." As he talked, he kept a sharp eye out for a bicycle tire he needed to replace a worn one back in Hanoi.

Assigned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to accompany me and two British journalists on a three-week trip through the country, he was an urbane, thoughtful man in his early 60s, comfortable in both French and English. He was intrigued by the nylon cord hung around my neck holding sunglasses and once asked if he could borrow it for a moment. He meticulously measured the cord against a length of twine, which he then, just as meticulously, knotted around his own reading glasses. For the rest of our trip he wore his glasses hung around his neck, looking pleased with himself for discovering this convenience.

While avowedly a deep believer in Communism, he was able to discuss its failings. "Inefficiency is built into the system," he told me. "No one below the highest level is willing to make decisions, so everything is backed up and takes far too much time." As we drove along Route 1, the main north-south coastal highway, he pointed to ancient, coal-fired locomotives hauling freight and passenger trains. "Some of those trains are hours late, some even days behind schedule. Our telephones work poorly, when they work at all. Power failures are a daily fact of life in the cities. Our old generals were good at winning the war, but they're not so good at running the country. It's time they hand control over to young technocrats—we have them—but the old have been reluctant to give up power.

"I've fought in the revolutionary movement since 1937," he continued, "and I've been a party member for more than 40 years." He elaborated on his career in the party, the sacrifices he'd made, his minimal personal expectations. And then, with a mix of bitterness and wonder, he spoke of his four daughters.

Construction workers put up housing on Hanoi's outskirts for the members of Vietnam's privileged class.

"People like us, who've spent all our lives in revolutionary struggle, are happy, no, overjoyed, with the reunification of our country. For myself, there's very little I require—a shirt and trousers, a pair of sandals; rice and vegetables and an occasional piece of meat or fish; enough living space for a bed and some books. What else do I need? But my children are different. Except for the one who served in the army, they don't share my revolutionary fervor. I find that they're very concerned with creature comforts. They complain that our apartment is too small. We have three rooms, a total of 37 square meters, for six of us. They want privacy. Privacy! They want meat three or four times a week, different styles of clothing, cosmetics, a cassette player, a television. It makes me sad, but I suppose it's inevitable that after a war goals change. After the struggle, young people have new goals."

As is now widely acknowledged, many of these "new goals" gradually worked their way north from Ho Chi

Such buildings, with two-room flats, are luxurious in a city where most people live in cramped quarters.

Stall offering sundries, some bought on the black market, is in Ho Chi Minh City's Central Market.

Lewis M. Simons

Proud owner of an aging Citroën sedan—pressed into service as a taxi—pauses along coastal Route 1.

Minh City (formerly Saigon) after the Communist forces crushed the south in 1975. The first wave of northern soldiers and government workers visiting the captured city were stunned by the quantity and variety of goods available. They brought their prizes back to Hanoi, unearthing a long-dormant passion for material things. In a very real sense, the capitalism of the south has made a greater impact on northerners than the Communism of the north has made on southerners. The tentative steps down the capitalist road—the officially sanctioned private businesses, the contract system between peasants and the state—reflect Hanoi's recognition that unity and prosperity can emerge only if southerners are allowed to retain a measure of their old ways. And the appeal of these ways is not lost on northerners. The foreign exchange of choice in Hanoi, for dealings over as well as under the table, is not the Soviet ruble but the greenback dollar, the currency of the hated, warmongering American imperialists. With

The electronics strip of Ho Chi Minh City's market is booming; government now taxes these vendors.

Lewis M. Simons

Do Dien, a 40-year-old entrepreneur near Quang Tri, runs his own small scrap-metal collecting business.

Huge steel plant in Bien Hoa, near former site of U.S. Air Force base, recycles destroyed tanks, other items.

the demand for dollars forcing black-market exchange rates ever higher, the authorities periodically devalue the dong to more accurately reflect its worth. But the government efforts have yet to bridge the gap. Currently the dong is officially valued at 80 to the dollar, while its unofficial worth is 480. When a Swedish TV cameraman with whom I flew in asked if he could leave some equipment overnight at Hanoi airport, an official warned, "But you must pay in hard currency." The Swede, who'd visited previously, teased, "You mean rubles?" "No, no," sputtered the official, not finding the repartee amusing, "hard currency—U.S. dollars only."

Gaining an honest sense of how southerners feel about life under Communism is difficult and a great deal must be deduced. Western visitors are accompanied everywhere by official "minders" assigned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Outside Quang Tri, a provincial center just south of the boundary that separated the divided country before the Communist victory, a man who seemed to have cause for bitterness began to unburden himself to me in fluent English. He said his name was Do Dien, he was 40 years old, and he'd been an employee of the U.S. consulate in Da Nang before its American personnel fled in the final days of the war. "There were no arrangements made for me to get out in time," he managed to say before one of my two "minders," a local man who spoke no English, cut him off gruffly and ordered him to speak only in Vietnamese. Then the gist of his story changed. "He says he didn't try to leave," my English-speaking "minder" said. Dien said he now runs a scrap-metal business, employing ten men part-time to dismantle ruined tanks and other armor abandoned by the fleeing South Vietnamese army. As I left him he was sitting sidesaddle on an old Honda motorcycle, waving to me with American-style nonchalance. "Hey, no problem," he called out, a broad smile across his face.

The best and worst of the Americans

In Ho Chi Minh City, still referred to as Saigon by many of its defiant residents, remembrances of Americans run deepest. The Saigonese benefited most directly from U.S. aid, from fast-spending GIs, and got to know the best and worst of what Americans had to offer them—and to fear what the Communists would do to them. In the 12 years since the city fell to the Communists, neither the worst nightmares of the Saigonese nor the dreams of their conquerors have come to pass. The victors have failed to digest this hard kernel of capitalism. The aging national leaders in Hanoi still nurture their 40-year-old dream of making Ho Chi Minh City the manufacturing and export center of unified Vietnam, the doorway to the world.

Fulfilling that dream requires the cooperation of the residents who know how to make the city tick—how to operate its port and factories—with a business acumen sharpened during the decades that the north's economy absorbed, and was absorbed by, dulling socialism. As a result, the regime has gone relatively easy on the city that the Communists loathed as the heartbeat of corruption and U.S. intervention.

Capitalism and private business still drive Ho Chi Minh City's economy. It is not hard to find people who regularly receive packages of appliances, food and medicines from relatives who've fled to the United States—which they sell on the prospering, and officially tolerated, free market. Given a chance, many Saigonese would leave tomorrow, as more than a million have.

There are, of course, many devoted Communists in the south. Some are native southerners who fought with the Vietcong during the war. Others spent time in the north or in Soviet-bloc countries, undergoing training. While some are hostile toward the occasional American visitor, a few are relatively open. In Hue, Nguyen Thi Bich Khue is such a person.

Born in the walled, imperial city, she was evacuated to North Vietnam in 1953, at the age of 10, during the height of the war against France. Educated in Hanoi, she worked there on cultural and educational projects. She has been a member of the Communist party for 22 years. Now 44, she is a woman of exceptional charm and grace. In 1975, she and her family returned to Hue, where she works in the provincial museum.

"Returning home was something I had dreamed about for more than 20 years," she said. "When it finally happened, it was both wonderful and heartbreaking. We were welcomed with great warmth by family members who had stayed behind. There were so many things about each other that we didn't understand, but we gradually came to agree on most points.

"And the city—so much was destroyed during the war. Much is still to be done. Our lives are stable, but our standard of living is not high. There are many difficulties. But, what you see here now, the new houses and factories, the green in the fields, is the result of combining certain policies of the north and the south."

But there were real limits to Khue's candor. As we spoke, two "minders" choreographed the interview. Of perhaps greater significance than her translated words was the faint smile on her lips and the sparkle in her brown eyes. What they hid I can only guess.

An increasingly rare sight in Vietnam, this remnant of war along Route 1 awaits the recyclers' tools.

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By Dan Hofstadter

A life hardly less romantic and turbulent than his novels

The epic fiction and stately poetry of Victor Hugo went into eclipse until a musical of Les Misérables *reminded people of greatness*

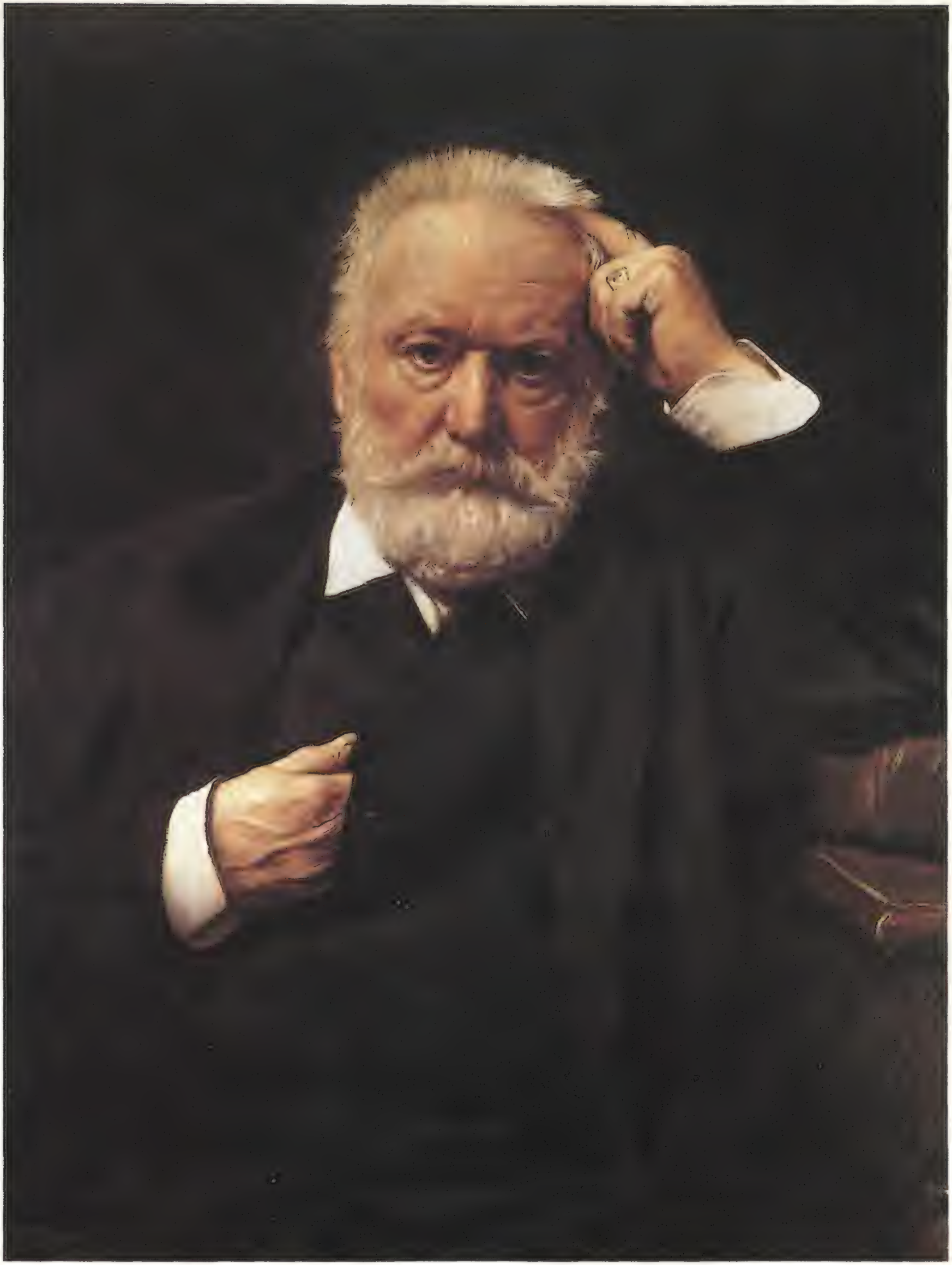
Chalk sketch by Emile Bayard for the 1904 edition of *Les Misérables* catches indelibly the waif Cosette.

While the 1985 centennial of the death of the great French novelist and poet Victor Hugo went as unnoticed in this country as most of his work has been for some time, the musical version of *Les Misérables*, his most popular epic work, has become something of a cultural blockbuster. Perhaps the neglect of Hugo's original work shouldn't be a great surprise. Most of us no longer care to read his interminable novels—*Les Misérables* being the great exception—and his poetry resists translation into English.

The musical or pop-opera—or *Les Miz*, as it quickly came to be known—is something else entirely. A sold-out smash hit during its Washington trial run, it already has a $10-million advance sale in New York where it opened last month.

The show was originally produced in Paris in 1980, and helped to spark a Hugo revival in France. It then went to London before its opening in this country. In the process, it has brought back to life one of the literary giants of all time.

Victor Hugo's extraordinarily prolific life stretched from 1802 to 1885. He first won renown with *Notre-Dame de Paris*, a huge novel set in medieval Paris. This work, published in 1831, made him rich enough to live on a grand scale and devote the rest of his life to literature and to social causes. Hugo's complete works fill a very long shelf—as originally published, *Les Misérables* occupied three ample volumes on its own—and a remarkably large portion of his poetry (especially the epic *Legend of the Centuries*, the lyrical *Contemplations* and the late, offbeat *Art of Being a Grandfather*) is first-rate. Still, one need hardly add that he is best remembered in this country as the creator of the fictional character called the Hunchback of Notre



Chevalier of France, in time France's greatest living writer, nobleman and, finally, private citizen.

This portrait made in 1879, six years before Hugo's death, captured the great author's imposing presence.

Painted by Boulanger in 1838, Mme Victor Hugo had a hot-and-cool relationship with her faithless husband.

In musical version of *Les Misérables*, hero Jean Valjean, left, confronts villain Javert, hands bound.

Dame, the part so flamboyantly played by Charles Laughton in the 1939 movie of that name and so movingly portrayed by Lon Chaney in the first film version.

Hugo also invented another great role—for himself. This was the modern, socially engaged man of letters. Because his life spanned so many changes of regime, the poet was ideally placed to bring his influence to bear upon successive governments. He grew up under Napoleon Bonaparte, who was overthrown in 1815; he matured as a writer in the conservative Bourbon restoration (1815-30); he scored his first successes under the authoritarian rule of Louis-Philippe, known as the Bourgeois Monarch. By the time of the great social upheaval of 1848-51, he had shifted to the left, and following a putsch mounted by Bonaparte's nephew Louis Napoleon he was forced to leave France.

An outspoken and fiery opponent of Louis Napoleon, Hugo roamed the streets of Paris exhorting crowds to rise against the monarchist. One night troops came to his house to arrest him. Hugo was elsewhere. The city was in turmoil. Hundreds had been massacred in the streets by Louis Napoleon's troops. Hugo fled to Belgium in December 1851 wearing a workman's cap and a black coat and bearing a false passport in the name of Jacques-Firmin Lanvin, printer's compositor.

The following August Hugo and his son Charles left Belgium for the Channel Isle of Jersey where they joined his wife and her daughter Adèle, who had gone directly from Paris. After two years they were on the move again, this time to the neighboring island of Guernsey. In all Hugo was away for 20 years, an exile he came to enjoy and from which he ceaselessly inveighed against the heartlessness and the corruption of France's ruling circles.

A parallel between himself on his scrap of land off the Norman coast and Napoleon I on Elba, awaiting a triumphal return, was hardly lost on Napoleon's nephew. Hugo's refusal to return to France after the amnesty of 1859 was an unmistakable confirmation of his intent to return at the Emperor's expense. But it was more than just that, for Hugo needed the actual condition of imprisonment, exile, isolation, to dream his dream of being Everybody, or rather Everyman, as embodied in his hero Jean Valjean. The writer's imagina-

Dan Hofstadter, painter and author, has contributed to The New Yorker *and* The New Criterion. *He wrote about François Boucher,* SMITHSONIAN, *March 1986.*

A cruel, vindictive Javert has hounded Valjean without mercy, but idealistic Valjean sets him free.

Juliette Drouet, one of Paris' great beauties in her youth, was Hugo's suffering mistress for 50 years.

tion was "aroused," as Frederick Brown has written, "only at extremes—that is, when engaged by the condition of nonentity or of omnipotence." Hugo's poetic nature saw itself in continuous oscillation between something the size of the universe and something the size of a pin. It is right, in his case, to speak of ego "inflation"; his "*moi*" was almost comically balloonlike.

In the end, Hugo did return to France in triumph; Louis Napoleon, forced to abdicate in 1870, was replaced by a democratically elected government. Hugo was to serve for some years in the legislature of the Third Republic, but his most important blow for universal suffrage and the rights of the common man would always remain his publication of *Les Misérables* in 1862.

Les Misérables was written about an outcast by an outcast—Hugo was in exile in the Channel Isles for most of its composition. It tells how a convict, a thief named Jean Valjean, saves a little girl called Cosette from a life of misery while converting himself into a benefactor of humanity. The hellish underworld described in the novel was a reality of midcentury Paris, much of which resembled New York's South Bronx of today. By piercing many grand new boulevards through the city's working-class suburbs, developers had destroyed a vast number of homes, thereby forcing tens of thousands of poor people into homelessness and petty crime. One of Hugo's rather morbid, pre-exile habits was to wander amid the terrifying scenery of underclass life—sewers, prisons, public executions—excursions that enriched his memory with a wealth of detail that would prove useful during the composition of his great novel of social protest.

We think of Hugo as a bearded man. He didn't begin sporting the white patriarchal adornment, though, until fairly late in his exile. It so nicely concealed his weak chin and the drooping, beagle-like corners of his mouth that when he returned to Paris, in the fall of 1870, he looked a perfect national father. Louis Napoleon had gone to war with Bismarck and been defeated at Sedan; as the Prussians occupied Paris, a new Republican government formed in Bordeaux where Hugo, voted a representative of the Paris area, was elected President of the Left. He stood, among other things, for the abolition of the death penalty and for a European union. During the Commune, the radical Paris insurrection of 1871, Hugo distanced himself from the republican government, which by then had

The author lived in exile, always writing, on the Isle of Jersey for two years, then moved to Guernsey.

moved to Versailles. In the elections of January 1872 he was perceived as a Communard sympathizer, and his constituents did not return him to the legislature. Not until four years later was he again elected to a public office, this time that of senator. It was largely a ceremonial role, but Hugo at least enjoyed his geriatric celebrity. Once the Emperor of Brazil approached him at a party. "I'm rather shy," said the Emperor. "I need your reassurance."

Exile had let Hugo live his metaphor; it also allowed him plenty of time for work. Work he did—*Les Misérables* was published in 1862—yet he would never have been able to complete this gigantic opus had he not already led a gigantic life. Before his expulsion he had been a Parisian, a poet, a publisher, a politician, a novelist, a husband and father of five, a nobleman, a member of the Académie Française, and a compulsive wooer of beautiful women. Few people of the last century can have met and known as many attractive and interesting people—or, for that matter, as many ugly and boring ones—as he did. He needed his recollections of these people in order to flesh out the characters in *Les Misérables*; we must picture him, if we wish to imagine him at work, sitting in the glassed-in belvedere atop his mansion in Guernsey and playing the great organ of memory—pressing the key of now this reminiscence, now that, and pulling out the manifold stops of feeling as he goes along. Before him is a large mirror; when he looks up he sees his own creased and grizzled head, and beyond it the immensity of the sea.

A champion of the masses

Where to plunge into this oceanic life? If we want to understand how a rather spoiled and conservative scribbler who had gone to considerable trouble to procure himself the almost empty title of Viscount was transformed into a champion of the toiling masses, we can do worse, I think, than to imagine ourselves back to the afternoon of September 9, 1843. We are seated in the Café de l'Europe in the little port of Rochefort, near La Rochelle. Except for the woman enthroned behind the cash register, the place is empty—or would be, that is, if a middle-aged couple hadn't just entered and walked all the way to the rear, where they sit down under a spiral staircase hung with red calico. He is fortyish, sturdily built, a trifle stout; his dark, lank hair hangs loosely about his temples. His eyes are quick, his nose strongly juts; only his retreating chin suggests some slight infirmity of his character. She is altogether striking. Her tawny grey coiffure encloses a face of truly angelic sweetness and prettiness. Laughing at some half-whispered remark of hers, he reaches over to pick up a pair of newspapers lying on a nearby chair. He opens *Le Siècle* and hands her the lighter,

more entertaining *Charivari*. She unfolds her paper, glances at the headlines, then looks up; his face is suddenly wet with tears, his lips white as chalk, he presses a hand to his chest. "But this is horrible!" he says in a choking voice, as she reaches out to steady him.

The man is Victor Hugo. The lady, one is pained to relate, is not Mme Hugo but rather Victor's mistress, Juliette Drouet. Returning from a long vacation in Spain and southern France, they are heading for Le Havre, where his 20-year-old daughter Léopoldine has been living with her new husband. The charming Léopoldine is his favorite child, the apple of his eye; what he has just discovered in a stray newspaper is that Léopoldine is dead—drowned, together with her young husband, during an outing on the Seine. "As long as I live," Juliette wrote, "I shall never forget the indescribable expression of despair upon his noble features. A moment earlier I had seen him smiling, happy; now, only a second later, without the faintest transition, he looked as if struck by thunder." There is no doubt that the loss of Léopoldine was the most tragic—and the most transforming—event in Victor Hugo's long and painful life.

Victor Hugo was the product of a broken home. Born in 1802 to a prominent Bonapartist officer and a Breton lady of fiercely anti-Bonapartist sympathies, he witnessed as a boy his parents' violent squabbles. By the time he was six they had separated, and his mother took up her life with another man whose temperament and opinions more closely matched her own.

Perhaps it was in reaction to these upsetting childhood experiences that the young Victor refrained from all physical contact with the fair sex until he married Adèle Foucher at the age of 20. This was a love match of the sort that one only reads about in old-fashioned biographies. He was the ardent young poet, she the demure and affectionate homemaker. The couple's first child, Léopold, died months after his birth; the next year, another baby was born, whom the couple christened Léopoldine. She grew into a bright and pretty child, a wonderful consolation for the loss of the Hugos' firstborn; she would always enjoy, until her sudden and shocking death, a special place in her father's heart.

Enter the remarkable Juliette

In the first eight years of their marriage—that is, until 1830—Adèle bore Victor five children. Apparently, the many confinements and the prolonged stress exacted a severe toll upon her love for her husband. In time he came to understand the difficulty of her position, but not before learning that she had formed a rather too-close friendship with the brilliant literary critic Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve. The stage was

Hugo's eldest and favorite child, Léopoldine, was tragically drowned with her husband in 1843.

Hugo's exile in Belgium, Jersey and Guernsey lasted 20 years. Painting depicts departure from Belgium.

Before he went into exile, Hugo lived in style on Paris' grand Place des Vosges. The house is now a shrine and a museum. Dining room shown here is re-created from decorations Hugo made in Guernsey.

set for the entrance of the remarkable Juliette Drouet.

The strange tale of Juliette Drouet and Victor Hugo is the story of a romantic archetype come to life with all its moonglow clinging luridly to it. If there is any sense to the age-old metaphor of "the prison of love," then Victor's love was that prison and Juliette its predestined and irreproachable prisoner. Juliette was an orphan from Brittany; she had come to Paris with the resolve to parlay her exquisite beauty into a shining future in the theater. Unhappily, the only person of consequence who ever credited her with any acting talent was the love-struck Victor himself, but her beauty nobody denied. Juliette soon became the plaything of one unscrupulous admirer, then another. Soon they followed one another in fairly rapid succession. One of them was the sculptor James Pradier, whose child, Claire, she bore at the age of 20.

Juliette met Victor when she won the role of Princess Negroni in his play *Lucrezia Borgia*. "A ray went out from your heart to mine," he wrote her, "like a sunrise striking into a ruin." She wrote back, "Come fetch me this evening at Mme K.'s . . . I'll give myself wholly and utterly to you." Within a few days she was astounded at the depth of her feeling: "Your love," she told him, "is the sun that has reawakened my life." And several months later: "If you had refused me your friendship I should have beseeched you on bended knee to make me your dog or your slave." Juliette must have felt especially pleased with her new friend when she presented him to her daughter Claire.

One thing that troubled Hugo was Juliette's reputation. If she would give up making her own living, he told her, he would get her an apartment and provide for her. At first she demurred, but by January of 1834 she was well on her way to abandoning her fashionable life of sin as well as the income she received from her admirers. She left her fine rooms in the rue de l'Echiquier and moved about five blocks farther north into a tiny apartment at 4 bis, rue de Paradis.

Of course there was no question of Juliette's marrying Victor: divorce was virtually impossible in this period of conservative monarchy, and her lover was attached to his family as it was. As a matter of fact, not long before Juliette moved to the rue de Paradis, Victor found new lodgings for his legitimate family at 6, Place Royale. The Place Royale was and still is the finest piece of residential real estate in Paris (it is now the Place des Vosges), and Victor was so delighted with

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his new address and its view out upon the patrician mansards of the Marais quarter that he even brought Juliette over, in the absence of Mme Hugo, to see his home-to-be.

This was the first of the many slices of humble pie that poor Juliette was to swallow for the next 40 years. Her will progressively enfeebled, she sensed that he had fatefully invaded her being, that she had become, as she put it, his "shadow." If he went out on a walk alone—and, weather permitting, he took a brisk constitutional every day—her soul was overcome with anguish. "What I ask is merely preference over—or, at least, equality with—your walking stick."

"Don't you feel, in my arms, like a vessel at port?" Victor asked Juliette. She may well have found him a port and indeed a citadel. Still only 33, he had already grown rich on his writing. Calling himself "the bear," he liked billiards, swimming and cards; he walked everywhere and had a huge appetite. "Ego Hugo"—*I am Hugo*—was his incontrovertible motto; it wasn't long before some of his acquaintances began to jest about his "monstrous Hugoism." And in fact his bumptious assurance really was extraordinary, even for a man of his acknowledged genius: nothing seemed to check his ambition. He was beginning to realize the myth of the Romantic past, to invent the exciting new social role of the full-time man of letters who makes all his own money and is received in high society. For all that, another, deeper side of his character had also made itself manifest. This other Victor claimed to hear dark angelic voices round about him, and would fall to his knees, in the oddest places, to lose himself wholly in prayer. A few years before meeting Juliette he had published a short book, *The Journal of a Condemned Man*, which seems to foretell his later period of flamboyant social reform and Christian humanism: its preface, added the year he met Juliette, has lost none of its power as a diatribe against capital punishment.

Hugo named this grandiose chamber in his Guernsey home in honor of the Italian patriot Garibaldi.

Enough to buy milk, cheese, eggs, an apple

Within a short time, Juliette slipped into the classic role of *la belle prisonnière*. Her theatrical career had collapsed, and her lover, inordinately jealous of her many former ties, had simply forbidden her to go out. She acquiesced. Every month he would supply her with about 800 francs, just enough to buy milk, cheese, eggs and an apple for the evening; whenever he dropped by her tiny apartment on the rue de Paradis he would go over her accounts. When alone she would write him adoring letters, do handiwork, copy over his manuscripts. Sometimes in evenings she would stroll through the Marais, past the decrepit palaces of a long-vanished aristocracy, past the seedy button-and-notion shops, and stop before the Hugos' great house, which glittered like a chandelier in the corner of the Place Royale. She knew that Monsieur and Madame were fast friends now (Adèle was growing tired of Sainte-Beuve), and that convention forbade her ever to enter the house in which they dwelt.

On Guernsey, in the belvedere, his bird's-nest studio —a light-filled pinnacle cresting his mansion, Hauteville House—Hugo worked in his usual furious and productive way. Every morning, he wrote a minimum of a hundred lines of poetry or 20 pages of prose. Juliette was housed a short distance away in a cottage. They saw one another almost every day. In time, when Adèle was away from the island of which she tired, Juliette even came into the house and presided over it.

Juliette's devoted heart brimmed over in her letters to her beloved "Toto." Published posthumously as *A Thousand and One Letters of Love*, these missives sustain the same note of adoration for year after year. Juliette was not well educated, yet her grammar was good and her style projects an uncommonly amusing personality. Her imagery, even when enlisted in the service of her countless cloying declarations of love, has an offbeat concreteness to it. These letters to the absent Victor (and Victor was usually absent) are so

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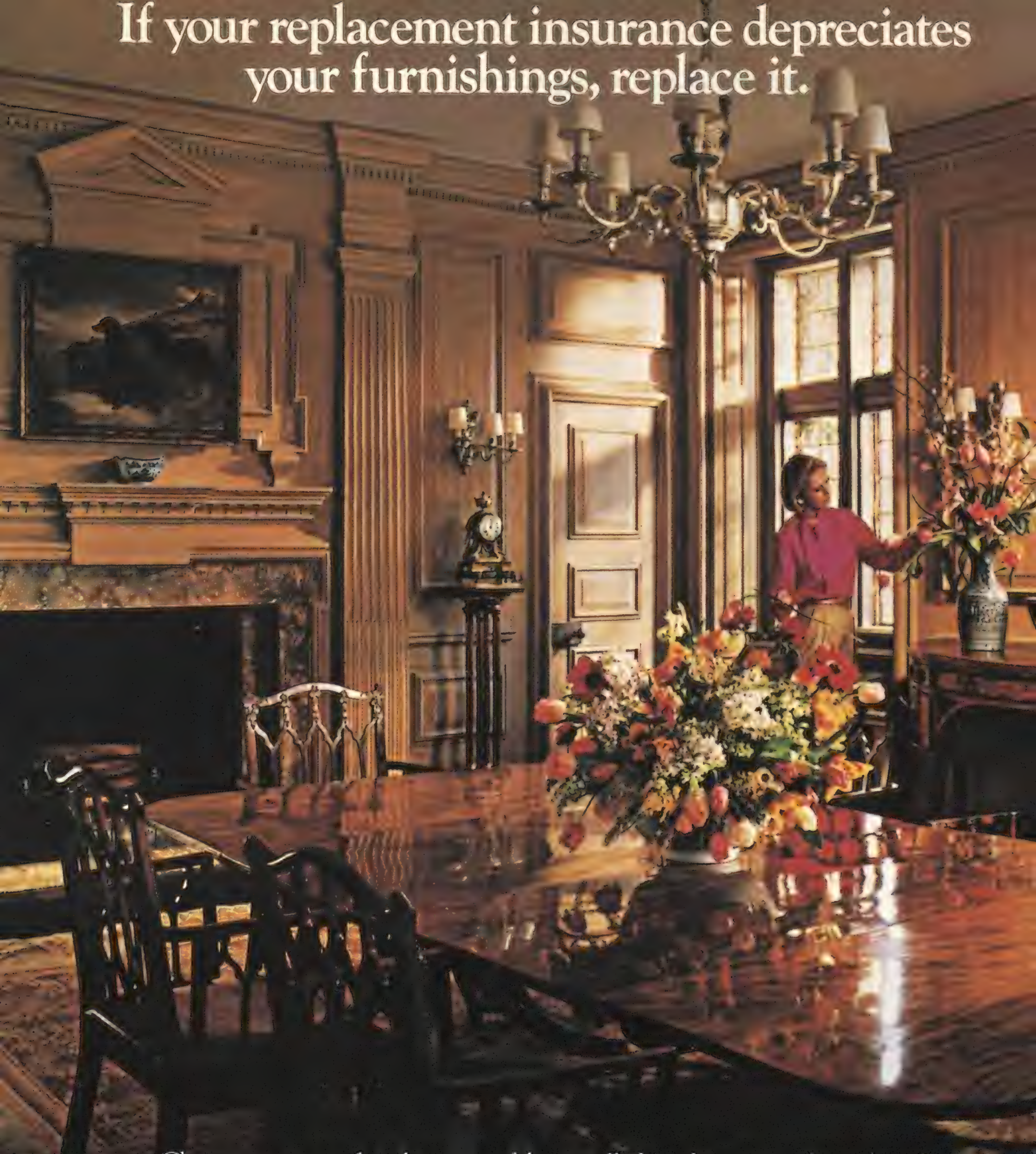

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Hugo adored his grandchildren, Jeanne and Georges. A late work was titled *Art of Being a Grandfather.*

saturated with emotion that one wonders how she could have had any feeling left for him at the times when he actually turned up.

Hugo was very much a medieval—a feudal or baronial—sort of person: he could have plausibly written himself, just as he was, into one of his "Gothic" blockbusters. How odd it is that this man who was to become the apostle of social democracy should have spent so much energy "vassalizing" or "enfeoffing" an ever-increasing horde of financial dependents: wife, children, mistress, mistress's child, sons and daughters-in-law, grandchildren, pensioned servants and, in the end, all manner of courtesans and political outcasts!

If one wants protection one has to pay up. Juliette paid with her freedom; no doubt her amorous servitude would have been intolerable had not Victor, beginning in 1835, swept her away on a month's vacation most summers. These were Juliette's happiest times; it was on one of these glorious swings that, arriving in the town of Rochefort, they walked into an empty café and opened that fateful copy of *Le Siècle.*

In the days that followed Léopoldine's death, Juliette proved a saintly support for her distraught lover. Her affection for his surviving children grew: "Did you give Dédé the sachet?" we find her asking him in a letter written later that autumn, referring to his remaining daughter. "Did Toto [a son] take back his quince jelly?" The purity of her feeling for a family she had never been allowed to meet is almost beyond credibility.

A profound knowledge of suffering

Ever since his *Journal of a Condemned Man,* Hugo had been toying with a theme that never ceased haunting him: the idea of a prisoner, a criminal, who redeems himself through his faultless love of the people around him. In the years following Léopoldine's death he began to develop an early version of this story into the huge novel that would later be titled *Les Misérables.* Hugo was by now profoundly acquainted with suffering; his parents had died, his brother had taken his own life, Léopoldine had been drowned, and soon Juliette's daughter, Claire—who had grown into a beautiful tall girl who signed her letters to him, "Your dutiful and respectful daughter"—was carried away by some mysterious ailment. If there had ever been any question of Victor giving up Juliette, it now vanished: he had been through too much with her. At this period, Hugo's mystical identification with the downtrodden masses began to make itself felt. By the time of Louis Napoleon's brutal *coup d'état* in December of 1851, he had quietly dropped the title of Viscount and joined the republican opposition.

More sorrow lay ahead for Juliette. On the evening of June 29, 1851, a mysterious packet bearing the arms of Victor Hugo was deposited at her little apartment in the Cité Rodier, near the Butte Montmartre (still Hugo's prisoner, she had moved there in 1847). Upon opening this packet, Juliette discovered to her consternation a large number of letters written by her lover to a certain Mme Léonie d'Aunet Biard, who in a fit of jealousy had sent them to Juliette to destroy her bond with the poet. There was no doubt as to the authenticity of these letters or, for that matter, as to the veracity of the story they told; in the coming months, Juliette must also have realized that Victor was the sort of man who is always involved with a good many women. He tried to pacify her. She replied, "All this I [now] know, yet you expect me to feel secure! Surely I should need to be idiotic or insane to do that. Alas," she went on, in what surely must be the most pathetic sentence in her whole correspondence, "I happen instead to be the most clearsighted . . . of women." Perhaps the most saddening aspect of this episode is that Juliette was one of the few people in Paris who did not know of Victor Hugo's connection with Mme Biard, for six years earlier the pair had been surprised by the police

in a cheap hotel—adultery then being a criminal offense. The scandal was the talk of the town.

Surely now was the time for her to have done with Victor. But Juliette was in her early forties, she had lost her looks and she was hopelessly tied to her faithless lover. When in December of 1851 he fled from Louis Napoleon's police to Brussels, she followed.

Juliette was to follow Victor wherever he went till her death in 1883 at the age of 77. (His wife had died in 1868.) Hugo was to survive Juliette by only two years. In time she was to be immortalized in his poetry and honored by his family; that cannot but seem cold comfort for the indignities she had to put up with. How, one wonders, could this lovely and intelligent woman have allowed herself to be impaled for life upon somebody else's obsession; for can anyone doubt Hugo's need to imprison himself, a need he eventually satisfied in 20 years of self-imposed confinement off the sea-battered Norman coast? The explanation lies, I believe, in Juliette's nature; she was one of those innocent people who cannot decode other people's emotions.

There is a bizarre coda to this sad story. While living on the Isle of Jersey, Hugo's second daughter, Adèle, fell in love with a certain Lieutenant Pinson, whom she pursued to Nova Scotia and then to Barbados in the vain hope of marrying him. In the process she lost her reason. She was fetched back to France and lodged in a home for the mentally ill, where she died in 1915. Victor Hugo's late correspondence is full of distraught references to this daughter's chimerical chase of a would-be husband; it never occurred to him that she was merely reenacting, in a tragically distorted form, Juliette's almost demented pursuit of himself.

As for Hugo's death, we have all heard crowds sing, and some of us have even heard them howl; but to hear the multitudes *reciting*, and reciting poetry no less—that is a sound very difficult to imagine. That is what the people of Paris did when the body of their beloved bard, housed in a simple pauper's hearse, was drawn up the Champs-Elysées on May 31, 1885.

On his death, Hugo lay in state beneath the Arc de Triomphe. It was reported that two million mourners came to pay their respects, many of them reciting his poetry. The author was buried in the Panthéon.

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From era to era over the decades, few automobile series have been accorded the admiration verging on awe that surrounds the premier sedans of Mercedes-Benz.

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A three-toed sloth, clinging to a young admirer, happily allows itself to be stroked under the chin.

Article and photographs by John Hoke

Oh, it's so nice to have a sloth around the house

Antisocial in the wild, these underachievers take surprisingly well to life with humans, giving up some of their secrets in the process

"Sir must to come! Lady had her baby last night!"

Lady, a three-toed sloth, had been with us more than two years. One hundred and six days ago she had mated with a young male. Now something had come of this meeting and Emmy (who kept house for us) proudly announced the long-awaited birthing. Sylvia, my wife, and I drew close to see the new arrival, nestled out of sight within the ball Lady formed on the seat of a dining-room chair.

At our approach, Lady raised her head and beneath it a tiny, almost pandalike face also lifted to peer at us. Lady slowly loosed one of her front arms and proffered a three-clawed "hand" in our direction, a standard, almost genteel "you-may-kiss-my-hand" greeting Lady offered whenever we aroused her (which was often, since sloths sleep as much as 20 hours a day).

A lady tolerates an intrusion

"I wonder if she'll let us. . . ?" I carefully slipped my hand between the youngling and its mother's chest, gathering it as slowly and gently as I could into my hand. Lady moved as though to accommodate my efforts. "It looks like she doesn't mind," Sylvia remarked. "But I'm surprised she's allowing this." I slowly brought the tiny bit of fluff a foot or so away where we could all get a closer look at it. "No farther, Sir!" Emmy commanded, "Or it will cry." The three of us studied the little creature clutching ever more tightly to my hand. It peered up at us with equal intensity while its mother looked on with an air of detachment.

"Lord, but its claws are sharp! And only just born." By now its tiny claws were drawing blood from the skin on the back of my hand, and with my start of pain, it let out a shrill, skreeing cry. Lady slowly placed the three claws of her outstretched hand about my wrist and gently gripped it. "Looks like visiting hours are over," Sylvia cautioned. Lady slowly drew my hand back to her chest. The newborn infant quickly slid its way back onto Mama and disappeared into the ball Lady reformed about it.

Having a few sloths around the house is unusual even in Suriname, where we were living. They were more than pets, however, for we learned a lot from them. Sloths are difficult to study in the wild: they are well camouflaged, they move very slowly, and they spend their time on thin limbs in the canopy where a researcher cannot follow. When they know they have been seen, they simply hunker down and wait out the most patient of biologists. So it makes some sense to bring the wild animals to the biologist rather than vice versa. Watching them adapt to a totally foreign environment reveals something of their natural defenses.

Sloths normally live in jungle vegetation—*up* in it. All their physical and behavioral processes are based

Like a couple of relaxed vacationers, two sloths sunbathe on hand-carved stools in the living room.

Basking is normal behavior; they do not maintain a constant temperature and need help to keep warm.

on living and moving about in an arboreal world: upside down, mostly, with three hooked claws on each of their feet to cling with as they navigate. Three-toed sloths are very light for their size, an important characteristic that allows them to climb high up into thinner-stalked canopy vegetation that is too frail to support many heavier predators. They are careful while they climb never to trust vegetation that "gives" too much when they grasp it. A sloth very seldom falls while it is climbing about.

Sloths are loners. Except for mating and carrying their infants, they live alone and very much like it that way. They can cry out, a kind of whistle often represented as "ai ai," but do so only when finding a lost infant, or perhaps when afraid or in pain. Should an infant sloth chance to get brushed off its mother, the baby will cry out and the mother will occasionally answer. At each call from the baby, the mother aligns her head with the source, and then moves toward the infant, repeating the process until the baby is found and back on board. The animal's eyesight is adequate but the infant, well camouflaged, is difficult to see.

A sloth hears well, too, despite reports to the contrary by naturalists earlier in this century. (One fired a gun next to a sloth and noted that the animal did not even flinch. Not moving, and thus remaining as inconspicuous as possible, is the sloth's built-in defensive strategy.) When we shared our Suriname home with sloths, we found that even a whisper would wake them, though they often would not move a muscle.

A sloth is very ill-at-ease and almost helpless when "upside down" on its belly on land. Only a fish, flopping out of the water, is more visibly distressed. Nowhere is the sloth more vulnerable to ground-based predators, such as large cats or snakes, or a harpy eagle. Except when they have to slowly and almost painfully span some necessary stretch of land between two arboreal places, sloths stick to upper foliage where almost all of life's needs are provided for them. True, this is the aerial world of the harpy eagle. In the thinly structured upper canopy of the jungle, however, if the sloth is well secured to a branch and hunkered down, the eagle is unable to land and must try to dislodge its prey while flapping its wings—a situation in which it

Two sloths share a tree out on the porch, a closeness they would not tolerate in their natural environment.

has relatively little pulling power. Eagles can severely injure, but often fail to secure, their prey under these conditions. Sloths are most vulnerable when sunbathing, something they enjoy doing and indeed must do after a cold night, which can lower their body temperature more than ten degrees. Then they sometimes stretch out, lying on top of canopy vegetation, unprotected belly to the sun.

Up in the treetops sloths are well camouflaged, their fur mottled by algae that grow in their coats. Spotting one in overhead vegetation can be frustrating because of its almost deliberately vague, still shape in the foliage. And the animal has other defenses. A sloth's coat is made up of two layers, an outer one of long, coarse hair and underneath a dense downy layer next to a skin that is unusually thick and tough. The chest cavity is surrounded by tightly spaced, wide bones; the net effect is fairly effective armor, enabling the sloth to survive even the ripping power of the eagle's talons.

Sloths have no active defense. They simply *do not* willingly fight. Should one happen to get caught off guard in the wrong place and time—and a cat, snake, or eagle seizes it—it is done for. When territorial or mating disputes with another sloth occur (which are rare), the ensuing "round-house" arm-swinging often appears more tiring to the swinger than harmful to the one swung at. Sloths build no nest and so there's little incentive to defend a home base. They would rather move than fight. Their muscle-backed claws serve largely to ensure good purchase while they slowly move, hand-over-hand and upside down, through the vegetation or to secure themselves to a limb or in a tree crotch. Above all else, three-toed sloths are timid creatures. Their behavior at every movement conveys a basic desire to avoid attention.

Lady, the self-assured, serene mother, was first brought to us in a gunny-sack, dangling from a bicycle. Her transformation into a member of our household might appear to be a feat of animal taming, but it really results from behavior traits rooted in that refined system of defenses.

Lady's captor dumped her out of the sack onto our screen-porch floor. As with all sloths, when on the ground among potential attackers, *up* became her first and only concern. The rungs of a nearby chair offered a hand-over-hand route to its top where she frenetically sought yet another "limb," farther up. I was standing nearby and became the avenue upwards, which was hard on thin shirting and flesh!

I grasped her beneath her stretched-out arms and abruptly planted her on my chest, face-to-face. She clamped her forearm claws into my back and the claws of her hind feet into my trousers belt and hip and tucked her head down out of sight. This is the position in which sloths, when clinging to a tree, are the most difficult to dislodge and thus feel the most secure.

I allowed the sloth a few minutes to play out this "waiting-for-the-attack" role and then began stroking her back. She tightened her grip and cried. But instead of an eagle clawing at her, she was experiencing a soft touch calculated to calm and reassure her. When I reached down to stroke her buried face and cheeks and

Sylvia Hoke

The author and Speedy Gonzalez, in middle, help to calm a wild sloth just captured in the nearby jungle.

Curled up in a chair, Lady forms a protective ball around her newborn, whose eyes are already open.

to lift her chin, she at first shied her head from side to side but finally allowed me to lift her head up and to look her square in the eye.

"Hey, 'ts-aw right! No one's going to eat you!" An animated, talking tree? Back went her head into the ball. But I kept this up until she realized her execution was not imminent. She loosened one of her forearms from its clutch and brought it up front and slowly reached for nonexistent overhead limbs. I followed suit, raising my arm above hers and offering several fingers for her to close her claws upon. She gracefully loosened her remaining grips on me and swung free, hanging from my fingers as she reached her other forearm upwards. I lowered her toward the floor, offering my other hand just above her searching arm. She clamped her raised forearm to it, loosed her earlier grip on my other hand, and again reached up.

I at length ended this climbing routine by pulling her closer and back on my chest where she again clamped her hind feet into my belt. She then loosed one of her claws from my hands and returned it under my arm to my back, resecuring herself. I placed my free hand softly on her back. She was still holding on to one of my outstretched hands: we looked like dancing partners.

Now the fear had left her face. She slowly reached her free hand toward my face, carefully slipped her claws over the bridge of my glasses, pulled them off my face, carefully inspected them and then dropped them. She then reached toward the pens sticking up from my shirt pocket. The curiosity stage had been reached: the worst was over.

Anyone who anticipates making an acquaintance with a sloth fresh from the bush would do well to memorize the above protocol. I repeated this performance many times over the years I spent learning about these creatures and introducing them to life in my household. While individual sloths might vary their routine, the script proved remarkably consistent.

Once sloths no longer fear for their safety, they become quiet and curious. Their drive to get up high, to avoid being caught on the ground, fades as their confidence increases. Then their basic solitariness also yields to a genuinely new experience: enjoyment of close association with humans. In a short time, a real and for them a unique sense of trust in their surroundings develops. From the human point of view, they display unexpected virtues:

- They are housebroken by nature.
- They are apparently odorless, or nearly so, even when wet; a dog exhibits puzzlement at not being able to "sniff out" any olfactory clues about a sloth.
- They are clean—if not deprived of rain (or a hosing-down substitute) to periodically rinse them down. Only when they lived in our rain-free indoors and were ultimately introduced to eating foods from a dish might their native ability to keep clean be frustrated. Boiled rice (which they came to relish), eaten from a dish placed on the floor, gums up their coat and becomes a real mess.
- They thrive on human companionship as much as dogs do. Our young daughter found the sloth to be the truest of teddy bears—and one that played *back*.

When I arrived in Suriname, I intended to make the most of so many life-forms that were new to me. Some pretty strange things might have found their way into our new home but for the screening Sylvia and Emmy provided, to decide just what could stay.

With the arrival of the first sloth, "Speedy Gonzalez," however, my interest in variety waned. Learning about

Its rear feet hooked to the base of a bamboo lamp, a young sloth tries a hibiscus. It prefers mango pits.

Sloths make themselves at home

Sloths are so slow it can take 15 minutes to climb a tree. Saddle mark identifies this one as a male.

this one animal would take some time. It, too, had come in a sack on a bicycle. We always upturned new offerings on the floor of our screened porch where whatever it was couldn't get away, even if what it was prompted us to escape into the house. Emmy knew enough about sloths to laugh, "Sir must to put a tree on the porch if the Loiri is to be happy." Loiri means "lazy man" or "slow," as did all the other local names for the three-toed sloth. We nailed a bare, leafless tree in the corner of the porch. Emmy was right. That's where Speedy spent all of her time, at first.

In time, six sloths lived on the porch tree. The more acclimated ones made the initial gamble of traveling the short stretch of porch floor to come into the house itself. We worried at first about what they might do, loose in bookshelves and things, but they proved remarkably sure-footed and seldom pulled over lamps, ashtrays, and the like. Some found new home bases inside that were quite practical, such as the base of an end-table light or the dining-room chairs.

I knew the sloth's Latin name: *Bradypus tridactylus*, or "slow-footed thrice-toed." But scientific literature on the animal was scant. There were some data on their physical structure but very little information about their general ecology and even less on their behavior. (Some of the latter was just plain wrong. Several explorers reported in the 18th century that when a sloth 40 feet up in a tree wanted to get to the ground, it simply let go and crashed to earth.) A colleague, Cal Burgett, suggested it was time to get out into the jungle and start learning about them on our own. Emmy, Cal and I loaded up with photographic gear and went to a nearby village that bordered the jungle. Emmy had relatives there and proved to be an excellent interpreter. She was able to convince them that we were quite sane and harmless.

Sloths hidden in tree pictures

It took a while just to learn to see sloths overhead; they tend to stay still if there is much going on below. When we adopted their slow-motion pace, they felt freer to move about in the canopy above. One objective was to photograph their excellent camouflage. Early results were lots of pictures of treetops. Sloths *were* in the pictures, but almost impossible to see.

One day Cal suddenly nudged Emmy and me and slowly pointed to the base of a sapling about 50 feet away. A sloth, forearms clamped to the tree, was apparently sitting on the ground, but busy sliding its bottom about. Through a telephoto lens I could see that it was using its stubby tail to dig a hole. Emmy laughed, "Sir must to take Speedy outside himself someday, when she has to 'go'!" Both Cal and I stared at her. "Why would they go to such risks—coming

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The right choice.

A sloth on the ground is almost a fish out of water. First, it is "upside down" from its usual orientation. Worse, it is at its most vulnerable to predators in a situation where its camouflage is of little help.

down where they are helpless—rather than just drop it from above?" Emmy shrugged; the question went unanswered for the time.

At length the sloth climbed slowly aloft. We first studied the finely camouflaged site and then unearthed the buried dung. It was crawling with small white larvae, which prompted Cal and me to question the sloth's health. This animal was particularly interesting. I had been photographing the unique hair styles sloths exhibited and the "coiffure" on this one was quite stunning. Emmy gave a nearby village youth a coin to go aloft and bring it down. "Sir must to keep it away from the others if it is sick!"

Back at the house, Speedy was causing problems herself. "Sir! *You* clean her up!" Speedy had somehow done the unthinkable and pulled a pot of very soggy rice over herself and the kitchen floor. With Speedy hanging on my arm, I slunk out the back door.

A biologist by training and a practicing engineer, John Hoke works on urban environmental matters for the National Park Service in the Washington region.

Speedy quickly attached her claws to the clothesline. Now upside down, she stared expressionlessly at me. I turned on a hose and started spraying her and soaping her upturned stomach—and then she let loose her wastes. She hadn't been out for almost a week and behaved as though this was quite normal. There were no larvae in the wastes so the apparent problems of the new sloth (confined to the garage) had not spread.

Emmy had been taking the sloths out about once a week. So I took over the chore to see if I could make any sense of their habits. Usually, a sloth would first climb a tree in the yard, perhaps to regain a sense of its normal habitat, then descend to the ground and repeat the process we had witnessed in the jungle. I began to experiment. I put the new sloth, the one we had just brought home, into a tree. I set the hose nozzle for a loose spray and played it on the animal as though the water were rain from above. At first, the sloth seemed to "bask" in the downpour. Then it arched its tail back and up and let its pelletlike wastes tumble down through the vegetation to the ground.

I tried the experiment with all the animals, with ex-

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An infant is introduced to a new leafy morsel by its mother. Sloths will sample almost anything that grows.

Young sloths are curious almost from the moment of birth, peering and reaching to touch everything.

actly the same results. If a sloth in a tree was showered with the hose, it would drop its wastes from above. If there was no "rain," however, the animal would come down to the ground, dig a hole, and so on. I talked it over with local biologists, and we hypothesized that this pattern was part of the sloth's defensive strategy of calling as little attention to itself as possible.

The sloth is able to pouch its body wastes for days at a time. In the jungle, it rains almost daily. If it does the sloth may loose its wastes; the sounds of dung falling through the leaves are masked by the sounds of the rainfall. Should it not rain, the sloth will pouch its wastes rather than risk attracting attention. But when nature calls and no rain occurs, the sloth laboriously executes the scenario described earlier.

What about the larvae? The new sloth, like most that had been brought to us, had been infested with small moths that darted in and out of its coat. One of my periodicals explained that these moths provided some form of symbiotic service (perhaps grazing on the algae growing in the sloth's coat) and thus were welcome and not parasites. Indoors the moths soon disappeared, perhaps because this environment was deficient, for example, in rainfall to wet the sloth and nourish the algae. From this we soon linked the sloth moth with the larvae: wild sloths always had sloth moths and their waste frequently exhibited larval presence. Years later, work done by staff of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama completely sorted out the relationship of sloth to moth.

As a result of writing abroad for data on sloths, I attracted the attention of others interested in this animal, including Theodore Reed, then director of the National Zoo. We at length decided it was time to try keeping a three-toed sloth in the zoo.

While it lived longer than previous ones, the sloth ultimately perished, apparently from viral infection: something new to us. A medical officer on the staff pointed out that the sloth's "live-alone" lifestyle might leave it lacking defense against the kinds of diseases gregarious animals share. He developed immunizations against influenza, which I injected into several of our sloths. In time, another sloth—this one "buffered"—was sent to Washington.

It lived longer than the first, but in time simply fell apart and died. Reed decided to have a necropsy performed. Unfortunately, at about this time my tour in Suriname was over. The sloth menage was dispersed to others who had become devotees and we came home. On a cold, gloomy day, Reed and I met over a cafeteria

DEWAR'S PROFILE:

ALESSANDRA FERRI

HOME: New York, N.Y.

AGE: 23.

OCCUPATION: Principal dancer, American Ballet Theatre.

HOBBY: "Trying to find the time to have one."

LAST BOOK READ: *Hopscotch*, Julio Cortazar.

LATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Dancing the lead in *Romeo and Juliet* and *Giselle* during the ABT's latest season. No mean feat.

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lunch to discuss the strange and unenlightening results of the necropsy: the sloth had been deficient in certain trace elements.

A man at a nearby table got up and came over. "Forgive me, but what you are talking about is of professional interest to me. I am an entomologist and those formulas you just listed are fascinating. Please tell me what you are about!" We told him of our attempts to acclimate a sloth to a zoo environment and of our puzzlement over the necropsy findings. Our visitor had the answer: "The trace element spectrum you have just defined is very close to that of the carpenter ant—and of a little-known South American relative known as the cecropia ant."

Then I remembered a joke people in Suriname pulled on a newcomer: they would give him a machete and ask him to cut down a cecropia tree. The tree, one of the many sloths graze upon, plays host to a particular ant. Touch the tree, and the ants flow out and shower down on anything in or below the tree. The cecropia tree has chambers in its stalk that become home for the ants. This affords an unusual, three-way symbiotic relationship among the sloth, the ants and the tree: one that is important for the sloth. Although a herbivore, it consumes at least a few of these ants when grazing in a cecropia tree, absorbing vital trace elements in the process.

Later Smithsonian researchers in Panama unraveled much more about the sloth's diet, particularly its catholicity. Even with the trace-element problem solved, however, the animals are still nearly impossible to keep in temperate-zone zoos for the same reasons that this otherwise perfect pet will never become common in North American households. They are very susceptible to cold weather, and their lack of a strong immune system leaves them with no defense against even common, normally trivial, diseases.

The sloths are still doing well in their tropical forests, however, and I treasure my memories of those that shared our home. The social high point came at a diplomatic reception for a visiting American general. I arrived with Speedy Gonzalez under the jacket of my formal attire. In the receiving line I opened my jacket and there was Speedy, staring up at the general. He stood his ground and put out his hand: Speedy extended a long arm and gently closed her claws around one of the general's fingers as they solemnly shook hands. The tone of the party changed instantly from formal to relaxed. Speedy spent the evening accepting tidbits from the buffet and hugs from the guests.

More typical was a frequent scene at home. I would be sitting on the couch in the living room. Speedy would laboriously crawl in from the porch and up into my lap. She would peer at me and then begin exploring: pulling her claws through my hair, tugging on an earlobe. Next she would go through my pockets, taking out each pen or piece of paper and carefully examining it. Satisfied, she would lean forward, tuck her head up next to my neck, and drift off to sleep.

This was the animal that early naturalists had called mentally deficient and poorly equipped. To me the experience of sitting on a couch with a sloth proved otherwise. I believe a scientist who includes this kind of approach (when feasible, of course) will find it offers checks and balances to other, more formal studies. Such experiences provide another angle on reality—and another motive to save our natural legacy.

Sylvia Hoke

After a particularly messy accident in the kitchen, soap may be necessary to clean an errant houseguest.

Sloths enjoy being hosed down, responding to it as though it were a natural rain in their jungle home.

Sylvia Hoke

The week we lived a life with cancer.

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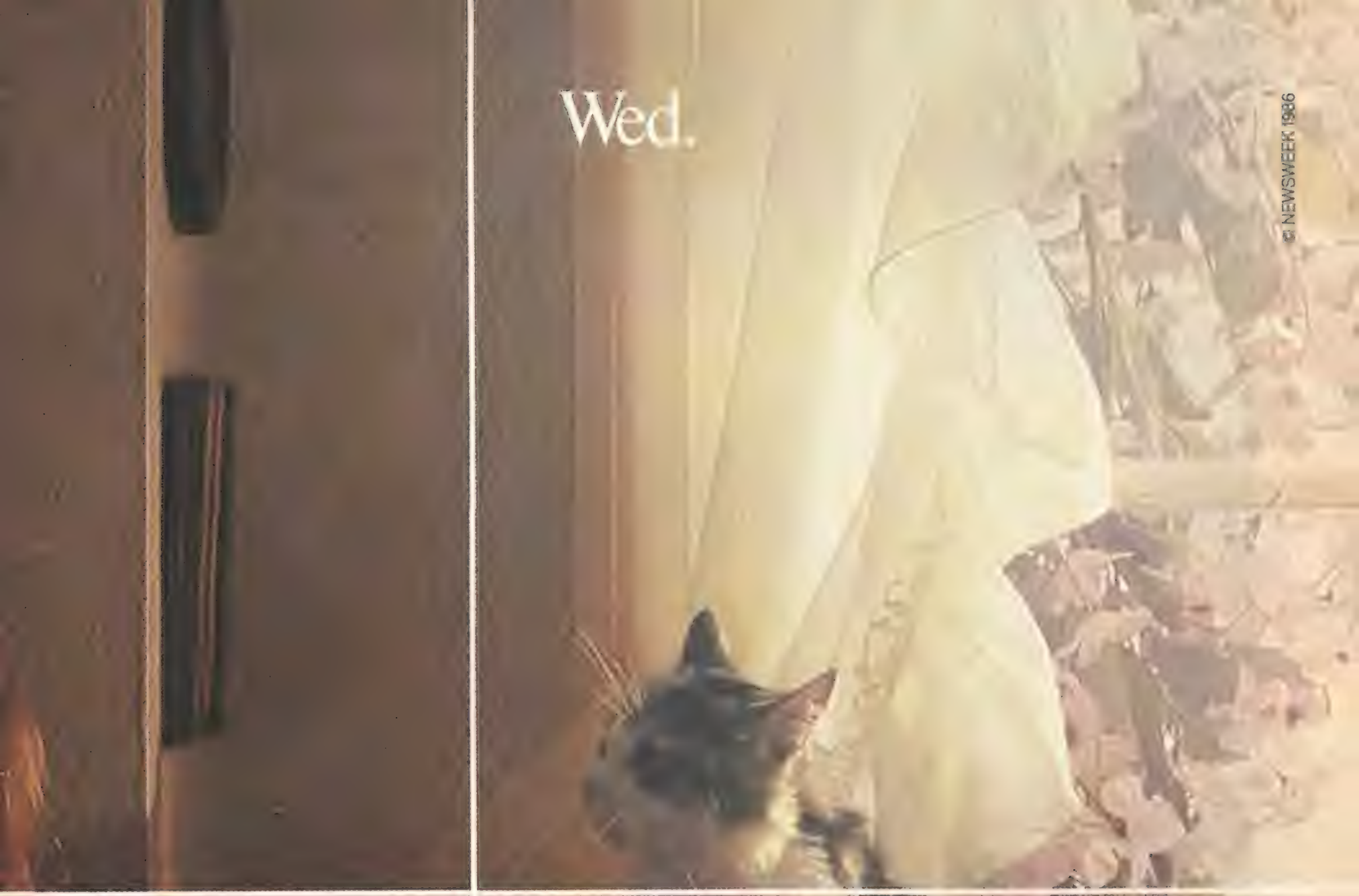

we told you what it means, after forty years, to live with the bomb still echoing in your mind.

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Why it happened. What it means.

Memorabilia displayed in Halper's home range from Mickey Mantle game (left) to World Series bats (right).

By Robert W. Creamer

One fan's tribute to baseball greats—and almost-greats

You expect to find Babe Ruth among Barry Halper's huge collection of baseball souvenirs. But Lou Novikoff? Moose McCormick?

In the summer of 1954, a 14-year-old baseball nut from Newark, New Jersey, named Barry Halper went to Yankee Stadium to see an old-timers game. Before the game began he waited outside the stadium with other fans to watch the old-timers come in. He had brought along two brand-new baseballs in the hope of getting someone famous to sign them. A very old man got out of a car with another man and started into the ballpark. "No one else seemed to know who he was," Halper remembers, "but I knew it was Cy Young. He must have been in his late 80s. I didn't even think about what I was doing. I hopped over the police barricade and said, 'Mr. Young, would you please autograph this ball for me?' A cop said, 'Hey kid, get outa here,' but Young said, 'No, that's OK. Let him alone.' He braced the ball against my left shoulder and signed it. Right on my shoulder." Halper still marvels at the experience.

"I said, 'Thank you, Mr. Young, I really appreciate it,' and he said, 'Wait a minute. Here's a fellow whose autograph you ought to get.' I didn't know who the other man was. Young said, 'This is Moose McCor-

Statue (foreground) is titled "Right Field Bleachers." Collection includes thousands of other mementos.

mick.' I still didn't know who he was. I looked him up later and found out he'd been an outfielder in the National League for five years; that he played for the Giants under John McGraw when they won the pennant in 1912 and 1913. I didn't want his name on the Cy Young ball, so I slipped that one in my pocket and brought out the other ball. I really wanted to save it for someone better, but I had to give it to McCormick to sign. He did and I thanked him, and then he said 'Wait a minute,' and he reached in his pocket and took out a little rubber stamp and stamped something on the ball. It was a moose! Can you imagine that? Years later I got the idea of asking other ballplayers named Moose to sign it, too. Now I have Moose Skowron on it, and Moose Dropo and Moose Haas. I like things like that, things that connect."

Halper, now a prosperous businessman in northern New Jersey, has been gathering "things like that" for the better part of 40 years. He's not the only one, of course; serious baseball collectors are turning up everywhere these days. But it is probably safe to say that Halper has managed to accumulate more meaningful memorabilia celebrating the great American pastime than anyone else around.

He has at least a million baseball cards (complete sets, usually with duplicates, of every series of cards issued since the 1890s), more than 900 players' uniforms and 3,000 autographed baseballs, plus dozens and dozens of gloves, bats, masks. He has every All-Star Game program. He has World Series programs going back 75 years. He has photographs, books, paintings, posters, statues. He has the autograph of every man, living or dead, in baseball's Hall of Fame at Cooperstown, New York, many of them on photographs and letters, which adds significantly to their value. He also has an autograph of Abner Doubleday, who, according to legend, "invented" baseball at Cooperstown in 1839 but who, it is interesting to note, is *not* in the Hall of Fame. Halper has batches of letters written by Ty Cobb; sterling silver trophies acquired by the great pitcher Christy Mathewson; the plaster mold that was used to cast the bronze plaque honoring New York Yankee hero Lou Gehrig (the first of the many plaques that now adorn the Yankee Stadium outfield), and a gold

Photographs by Henry Groskinsky

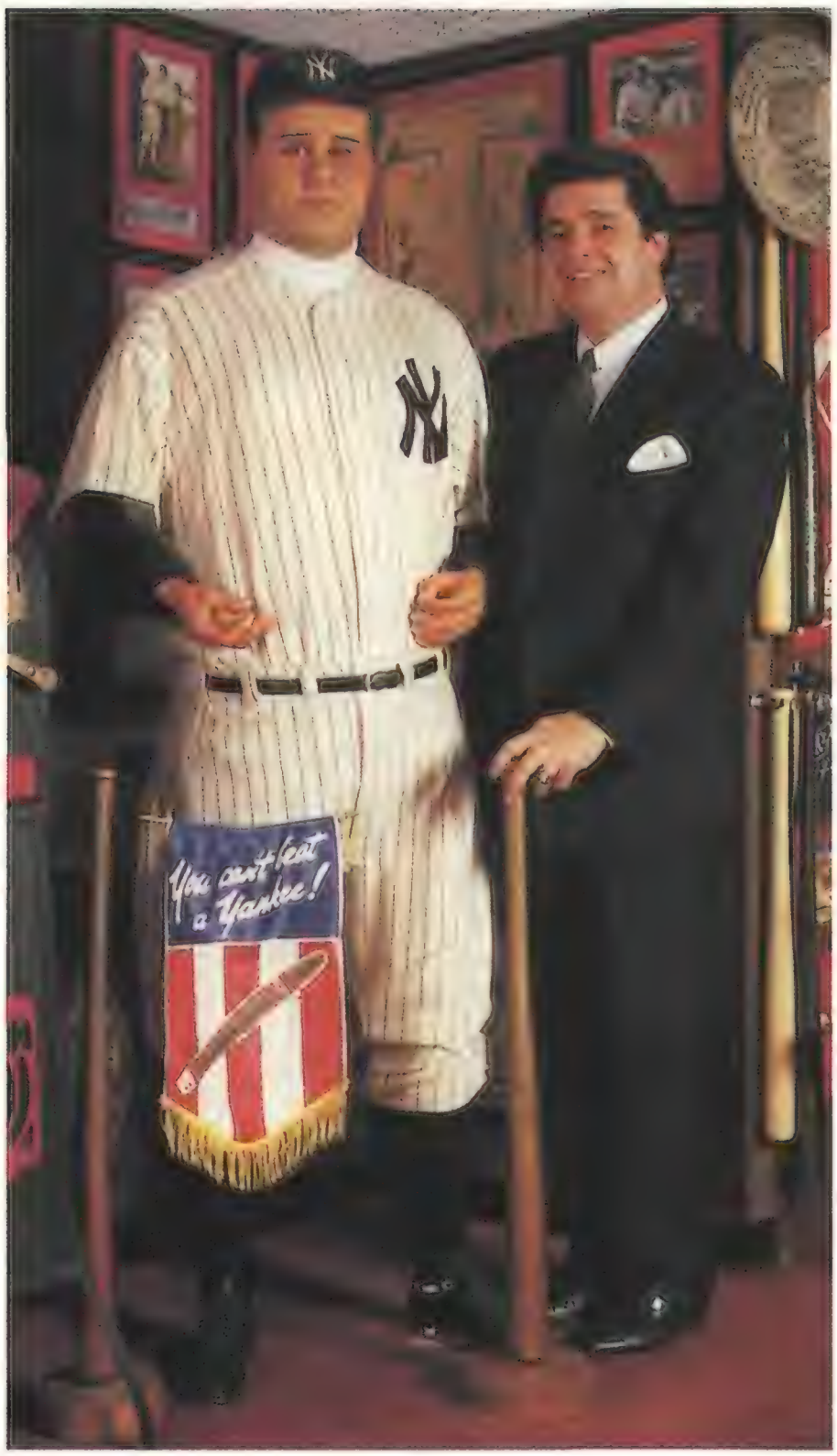
watch that belonged to a New Yorker named Alexander Cartwright. In the 1840s, Cartwright and several others did what Abner Doubleday was supposed to have done several years earlier in Cooperstown—designed the field and established the basic rules of the game that quickly became the nation's favorite.

All of that, mind you, is just for starters.

Obviously, anyone who has so much antique junk lying around must be some sort of hyperkinetic weirdo whose wife and children are long-suffering victims of his obsession and whose house is a jumbled rat's nest of confusion. But in Halper's case, that simply isn't so. He is a big, calm, dark-haired man. He spends most of his time functioning as the chief executive officer of a family-run company that distributes paper products and maintenance materials to stores, bakeries, restaurants, fast-food chains and the like. He is one of 18 limited partners who, along with George Steinbrenner, own the New York Yankees. His wife, Sharon, a charming, attractive woman, appears to be in complete accord with her husband's spare-time preoccupation with baseball and collecting. Jason, the youngest of Halper's three children and the only one still at home, is a lively 11-year-old who plays soccer as well as baseball, can mimic to perfection the batting stance of a Don Mattingly or the pitching motion of a Goose Gossage, and is already becoming something of a collector himself.

Halper's stylish, split-level home in a suburb near New York City is nothing at all like a rat's nest. Only a few baseball-related items are in evidence throughout most of it. The collection is kept downstairs in three big rooms. One of those basement rooms leads through glass doors to a patio and a swimming pool. Several tip-up grandstand seats from Yankee Stadium, obtained when the place was rebuilt a decade ago, are set up along a path to the pool. Inside the glass doors is a dark blue rug bearing the "NY" logo of the Yankees. Barry got it from Steinbrenner when George was having his Yankee Stadium office redecorated.

For a baseball fan, the experience of going from the center hall of the large house down a short flight of steps to Halper's collection is almost like entering a cathedral. The first thing you see are the photographs, some current, some more than a hundred years old. One photo, dated 1886, was taken on the opening day of the season beginning the National League's second decade of existence. It is a group picture of the two teams that played that afternoon, the New York Giants and the Boston Beaneaters. Halper can show you some



Halper puts arm around statue of Babe Ruth that he got from Madame Tussaud's wax museum in London.

of the famous baseball people in the group—Jim Mutrie, the New York manager who gave his team its famous nickname ("My big fellows!" he is said to have cried. "My giants!"), Tim Keefe, Mickey Welch, Roger Connor, Orator Jim O'Rourke and, toward the rear of the photo, Old Hoss Radbourne, the near-legendary pitcher who in 1884 won 60 games in one season.

Near the bottom of the stairs is a large cardboard cartoon of an umpire covered with the signatures of baseball people who have visited Halper's "museum," including Joe DiMaggio, Reggie Jackson, Hank Aaron, Stan Musial, Frank Robinson, Tom Lasorda, Dwight Gooden, Gary Carter, Ron Guidry, Billy Williams, Joe Garagiola. Beyond it is a life-size figure of Babe Ruth that Halper obtained from Madame Tussaud's wax museum in London. Ruth's features are remarkably lifelike, even to a faint stubble of beard. Halper has the batting helmet Hank Aaron wore when he hit his 715th home run to break Ruth's career record. He has a set of golf clubs that belonged to another famous home-run hitter, Jimmie Foxx. He has advertising posters from the '40s and '50s ("Ted Williams says Make Mine Moxie for a LIFT . . . the HEALTHFUL Way"; "Say, Hey! These Chesterfields ARE GREAT! Willie Mays"; "Lefty Gomez says The Pitch Is To Country Club Malt Liquor"). He has another poster, looking almost new, that says: "Spalding's Official Base Ball Guide 1885—For Sale Here."

Despite the tremendous quantity of material, it is displayed gracefully and efficiently. Take those old uniforms, for instance. They've been dry-cleaned and they hang on a dry cleaner's conveyor belt in a large, air-conditioned closet. To look at them, Halper presses a remote-control button that raises a "window"—actually, a big, framed painting of Babe Ruth fixed to a wall panel—and then he activates the conveyor belt with another remote control to bring the uniforms swinging past the aperture (p. 106). The baseball cards are sorted by year in plastic sheets in looseleaf folders that hang from metal rods and swing up for inspection after the doors of the sleek, redwood cabinets in which they are stored are opened. The autographed baseballs are arranged in neat lines on shelves along the walls, each ball held aloft like a trophy in its own small mitt-shaped holder.

Against a wall is a baseball pinball machine from the 1930s that the producers of the movie version of Neil Simon's hit play, *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, recently borrowed from Halper for possible use in several scenes. (The machine does not appear in the movie

Items from the fuss over George Brett's pine-tar bat exemplify Halper's fondness for things that connect.

ORIOLE
PIN
Barry -
The Bat which you have
has Never been broken -
This is The original Pine
tar bat of 7/24/83
its yours now
to Barry -
This is The bat that i used
on 7-24-83 at Yankee Stadium
when i hit the home Run off
"Goose". The Pine tar had to
be cleaned up so i could use
The bat again - its yours now
take Care of it
Louisville Slugger

More than 900 uniforms in closet (center) swing past window on dry cleaner's conveyor belt. The blue books under uniforms contain old programs, score cards, tickets. Busts are Ty Cobb (left), Lou Gehrig (right).

but a number of other items from Halper's collection do.) Beyond the pinball machine are an older, cast-iron "Mutascope" (a hand-operated peep show that reveals Ruth in his prime swinging a bat) and a coin-operated penny-arcade baseball game in a glass case (a steel "baseball" smaller than a marble rolls down a curved slide toward home plate, where a small wooden bat, controlled from outside the case, waits to swing at it). There's also a tabletop game with a baseball diamond imprinted on a tin surface (p. 111). The last names of star players appear at each position, and they are like shards from an archaeological dig: Amos Rusie, pitcher; Buck Ewing, catcher; Dan Brouthers, first base; John Montgomery Ward, second base; Jack Glasscock, shortstop. The game was made in 1893.

Here's a handsome, glass-topped coffee table with a display of All-Star Game press pins from 1937 through 1986 and World Series press pins from 1911 through 1985 (pp. 110-11). Over there, in sharp contrast, is an ordinary-looking can with a label that says, "Oriole Pine Tar." With the pride of a true collector, Halper explains that it is the very can from which Kansas City Royals third-baseman George Brett took the gunk that he smeared on his infamous "pine-tar" bat. That was the bat Brett used in 1983 to hit the home run that was disallowed by the umpires but later reinstated by the league president. Halper acquired the pine-tar ball from the fan who caught Brett's home run in the Yankee Stadium bleachers. He also obtained the fan's ticket stub, and a business card from a magistrate who had the misfortune to become involved in the controversy. Later, he had a visit from Goose Gossage, the Yankee relief pitcher then who now plays for the San Diego Padres. Gossage grinned when he saw the ball and agreed to autograph it. "I threw the [censored] thing," he wrote over his signature.

Halper had the pine-tar bat, too—for a while. Brett autographed it and gave it to him, but there was an immediate reaction in Kansas City against such a highly publicized Royals artifact going to a private collector, particularly one who was also a part owner of the Yankees. Brett didn't want the bat back, but Kansas City did and Halper returned it. "I don't want anything people don't want me to have," he says. Brett later gave Barry a different bat, this the one he used to hit three home runs in one game against the Yankees during the 1978 American League Championship Series. He also gave Halper the uniform he wore in the pine-tar game, and John Wathan, a Kansas City teammate of Brett's, sent Barry the baseball Wathan caught for the final out of that unforgettable affair. The pine-tar memorabilia are all displayed, together with a photograph of the missing original bat and the note Brett wrote when he gave it to Halper, in one remarkable exhibit (p. 105).

A particular treasure of Halper's collection is a 20-inch-high bronze statuette of a ballplayer swinging a bat. The name of the piece, inscribed by the sculptor

Robert W. Creamer has written biographies of Babe Ruth and Casey Stengel. He was an editor at Sports Illustrated *for more than 30 years.*

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Where quality starts with fundamentals

on the statue's base, is only "Baseball Batter," but the spread stance, the level swing, the twist of the torso and the tilt of the head make it obvious that the subject is Joe DiMaggio. DiMaggio is a frequent visitor to Halper's home and has signed many photographs and other things for Barry, usually with comments that display a warm, self-deprecatory sense of humor. On a photo of himself looking untypically awkward at bat he wrote: "Barry, the only good thing about this swing is that it wasn't a strike. I didn't break my wrists." On another, of himself as a young player working out in gym shorts and T-shirt, he wrote: "I didn't know I had that many muscles."

During a visit to Halper's a few years ago, DiMaggio noticed several statuettes of other players and said, "You don't have one of the old Clipper." Halper said he had never come across one. "Someone did a statue of me once," DiMaggio said. "An old Italian guy—I can't remember his name."

Halper began phoning around, asking various collector friends if they had ever heard of a small statue of DiMaggio. It took a long time but finally he came across an art expert who said the sculptor was probably Clemente Spampinato, who lived on Long Island not far from New York City. Halper tracked down his phone number and called. Spampinato had a strong accent, but Halper was able to understand him. Yes, he had made a bronze statuette of a baseball player. Yes, he had a copy of it, right there in his home. No, he wasn't interested in selling it.

Halper asked if he could come out to Long Island anyway, just to look at it. "Sure," Spampinato said, "but you have to come early in the morning, before eight o'clock." It was a 60-mile drive, but Halper was there at seven. An early riser, he's usually at his desk in the Halper Bros. office by five in the morning.

Complete except for the number

At Spampinato's, Halper was impressed by the beauty of the statuette, which Spampinato had done from photographs, and he made such a generous offer for it that the sculptor finally gave in and agreed to sell it. In admiring the piece, Halper noticed that DiMaggio's familiar number 5 was missing from the back of the uniform.

"There wassa no number in the picture," Spampinato explained. "You wanna number? I put on a number."

Halper asked how long it would take.

"Oh, a coupla weeks, maybe a month. You leave it here, I do it for you."

But Halper, with the statuette in his possession at last, was reluctant to leave it behind. "Never mind," he said. "It's fine the way it is."

DiMaggio gazed approvingly at the bronze (p. 111) the next time he visited Halper. "Except for the number, he certainly got everything right," Joe said. "Even my belt buckle. See how it's way over to one side?" Sure enough, there on the little statue the belt buckle was well off center. "I always wore it that way . . . like my idol," Joe said. "Your idol?" DiMaggio smiled. "Charlie Gehringer," he said, referring to the Hall-of-Fame second baseman who played for the Detroit Tigers. "I always admired Charlie Gehringer, and he used to wear his belt buckle that way."

Halper has been a serious collector of baseball material since the late 1940s, when he was eight or nine years old. He grew up in Newark, New Jersey, only a few blocks from Ruppert Stadium, home field of the minor-league Newark Bears. During the baseball season he would frequently go over to the stadium after school. "My father would pick me up there after work, around five, five-thirty," he says. "A lot of times there were twilight doubleheaders that started late in the afternoon, and sometimes my father would sit and

Stretched out on the floor near baseball-mitt chair, Halper's son Jason looks over his own card collection.

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watch a few innings, but most of the games were night games, and all I'd see before I had to go home was batting practice. I liked just going into the ballpark. You'd go through the gate and under the stands—like walking through a tunnel—and then all of a sudden you were out in the open and you saw the field, the grass, the baselines, the dugouts. It's an indescribable feeling. Baseball fans know what I mean. I loved that feeling. I still do.

"If you got to the park early, you could go down close to the field and talk to the players. Or I'd walk up and down through the stands, looking for discarded programs. Every day I'd bring home 20 or 30 programs. Next day I'd bring some to the ballpark with me and get players to sign them. I saved every program. Today, Newark Bears programs—you can name your price. Nobody else has any, and real collectors who know the Bears were one of the great minor-league teams want them. I've gotten some good things trading Newark Bears programs."

The Mad Russian comes through

One of the Newark players was Lou Novikoff, known as The Mad Russian. A minor-league star before going up to the Chicago Cubs in 1941, he had been pretty much a failure in the majors, and in Newark he was on his way down. Despite his nickname, Novikoff was a friendly, outgoing man, and almost every day young Halper would ask him for his autograph. "You here again?" Novikoff would say. "I signed yesterday." The eight-year-old would argue, "That was yesterday. This is today. Sign. Please." One day Novikoff said, "Listen, do you have any uniforms? You want an old uniform? If I give you a uniform, will you stop bothering me for autographs?"

Novikoff went into the clubhouse and came back with a uniform that had belonged to Barney McCosky, a star with the Detroit Tigers who later spent a season or so in Newark. Other players followed Novikoff's lead, and young Halper soon had three or four more old uniforms hanging in his bedroom closet. "And I still have them," he says.

Halper is not content with merely collecting souvenirs. He enjoys finding ways to amplify their significance. Take the baseball that Cy Young signed for him. Young died in 1955 at the age of 88, and the following year the baseball commissioner established the Cy Young Award to honor the best pitchers in the majors each season. Halper was contemplating the autographed ball one evening when it occurred to him that the winners of the Cy Young award were all relatively young men, and all were alive. He decided to get each of them to sign the ball with Cy Young's autograph on it. He got more than 30 autographs on the ball before he ran out of space. (Steve Carlton, who won the National League Cy Young Award in 1972, 1977, 1980 and 1982, asked if he should sign the ball four times. "There isn't enough room," Barry said, so Carlton wrote "Steve Carlton 4.") Now Halper plans to have the five other winners, as well as the new Cy Young winners each season, sign a second ball with Young's signature on it that he bought at a collector's show. "It's a valid signature," he says of the second ball, "but I have to admit it doesn't mean as much to me as the one I got Cy Young to sign."

Many years ago Halper's father was given Babe Ruth's autograph on a plain sheet of paper, and in time he gave it to Barry, who took it with him when he went off to college at the University of Miami, where he played baseball under the coaching of Jim-

Glass-topped coffee table features press pins from 53 All-Star Games, and World Series games since 1911.

Other memorabilia consist of commemorative buttons, tie clasps, cuff links, watch fobs, penknife and jersey.

mie Foxx. Halper says he wasn't much of a college player, but he enjoyed sitting on the bench listening to Foxx talk baseball. One day he brought the paper with Ruth's autograph to the ballfield and had Foxx sign it. Some time later, another famous home-run hitter, Mel Ott, stopped by to visit Foxx. Halper dashed back to his dormitory, got the paper and had Ott sign it, too. At that time, Ruth, Foxx and Ott were the only players ever to hit 500 or more home runs during their big-league careers.

Not long after that, Ott was in a serious automobile accident and died the next day. Ruth had died ten years earlier. Foxx died in 1967. Meanwhile, a spate of other players were reaching the 500 mark in career home runs. One day Halper realized that there were a dozen of them, and that all were alive except Ruth,

Foxx and Ott. He went to work and in a relatively short time had acquired the signatures of the nine newer members of the 500 club on his increasingly precious piece of paper.

Then Reggie Jackson began closing in on the mark. Late in 1984, when Jackson and the California Angels came into Yankee Stadium for a three-game series, their last New York visit of the season, he was at 497. Halper went to all three games on the chance that Jackson would have a hot series and reach 500; he could then ask Jackson to add his signature to the distinguished list.

Jackson was in a slump, and he hit no home runs at all in Yankee Stadium. After the last game, Halper told Jackson about the 500-club signatures and said, "I won't be seeing you anymore this year, so I'll have to wait until next year to get you to sign this."

"Hell," Jackson said, "Give me the sheet. I'll sign it right now."

Halper demurred.

Jackson said, "Hey, I know I'm going to get it, and you know I'm going to get it. I might as well sign now." Halper still resisted, and Jackson stared at him, suddenly angry.

"You don't think I'm going to get 500, do you?" Jackson said. "Well, the hell with you. Either I sign that paper now or I'll never sign it."

"Come on, Reggie, be reasonable," Halper said. "Suppose you don't get to 500 by the end of the season, and suppose during the winter some big business deal comes along. I know you. You're apt to retire from baseball. I know you're going to hit 500, but I want to wait until you *do* it before you sign this."

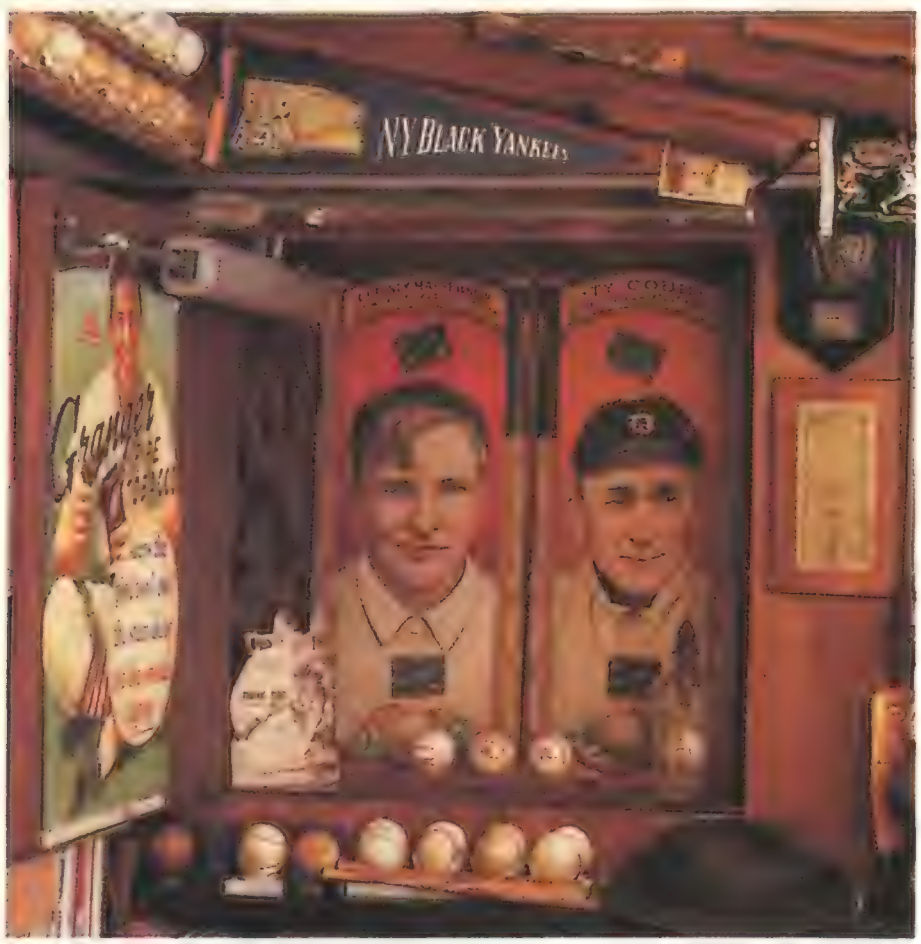
Jackson cooled down. "OK," he said. "You're right. We'll wait."

Jackson did hit his 500th before the end of the season, and by the time Halper saw him again, in 1985, he was up to 510. When at long last he signed Halper's paper, Reggie suggested he add "510" after his name for the number of homers he had hit.

"No, don't do that," Halper said. "Wait until you retire. Then we'll put the final total in."

"I can tell you right now that it's going to be 574," Jackson said. Halper asked how he could be so sure. "Because that's going to be it," Jackson said. "Boom, 574, and the next day I pack it in." Halper later realized that 574 home runs would move Jackson into fifth place on the all-time list, behind Aaron (755), Ruth (714), Mays (660) and Frank Robinson (586), but ahead of Harmon Killebrew (573). Going into the 1987 season, Jackson is in sixth place, with 548 home runs, and still swinging.

Halper gave Reggie a little present several years ago. "It was a Babe Ruth autograph that I picked up at a show," the collector recalled recently. "It was on a white card, and it said, 'To Reggie, with best wishes, Babe Ruth.' Reggie got a real kick out of it." Halper was silent for a moment and then he said, wistfully, "I wish I could find a card that said, 'To Barry, with best wishes, Babe Ruth.' "



Framed by balls, masks and pennant, posters of Christy Mathewson (left), Ty Cobb promote baseball cards.

The Babe's caps, bat and other paraphernalia still stir emotions that attest to baseball's enduring appeal.

By Richard Wolkomir

Sculpture in the subways? Is there a better place for it?

In the beginning it didn't look like an idea whose time had come—but now Boston's riders find that underground art is a tonic

When sculptor Mags Harries agreed to produce a work of art for a new Boston subway station, her initial idea was tree roots. They would be bronze, protruding from the station's subterranean walls. But the architects were unenthusiastic.

"The whole philosophy of subway stations, it turns out, is to make them seem as *un*-underground as possible," says Harries, in the intonations of her native Welsh coal-mining region, where going underground spooks no one.

She was flirting with the notion of turnstiles in the form of a flock of sheep when a blizzard struck Boston. As the snow slowly melted from the streets, she saw lost gloves pop up everywhere. "They were wet, compacted, squashed—*really beautiful*!" she says. Gloves, she decided, would be her theme. Lost gloves.

That was in 1978, when Boston was just beginning the country's first systematic installation of fine art in subways. The MBTA (Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority) was extending its Red Line 3.2 miles northwest from Harvard Square, in Boston's neighboring Cambridge. Harvard station would be rebuilt, three new stations would be added, and fine art would go into all four. Mags Harries' bronze gloves would go in the new Porter Square station, the MBTA's deepest, with escalators descending 120 feet from a street-level glass solarium to the platform.

"The architects worried that the escalator might frighten people, it's so deep, but I realized the experience of riding the escalator was too powerful for art to mitigate." Harries installed life-size bronze gloves on the metal divider between the station's escalators. "One glove is just a glove, but 54 gloves become a life form, and it would have so much variety you could have fun with it," she said. The Red Line extension's 30,000 daily riders now find the gloves gesturing evocatively, starting with a big glove giving birth to a little glove. Some gloves have two thumbs, or only three fingers. One large glove extends a finger toward a smaller glove, like a caricature of Michelangelo's Jehovah transmitting life to Adam on the Sistine ceiling.

Arnie Berman, a bearded and jovial MBTA inspector, originally a skeptic, is now an enthusiast. "You'd be surprised how many people still have to touch those gloves, after two years," he recently announced, pointing as evidence to gloves touched so often the bronze is rubbed shiny.

Mags Harries' *Glove Cycle* is just one of 20 artworks in Boston's four new subway stations, with more to come as the MBTA rebuilds old stations system-wide.

William Wainwright's mobile sculpture brightens things up in Cambridge's Porter Square station.

Photographs by Richard Howard

Art goes underground in Boston

Sculptor Mags Harries catches common objects, lost gloves, in bronze at the Porter Square station.

Joel Janowitz's ten-panel mural, *Alewife Cows*, adds a sense of sweeping pastoral life to the Alewife station.

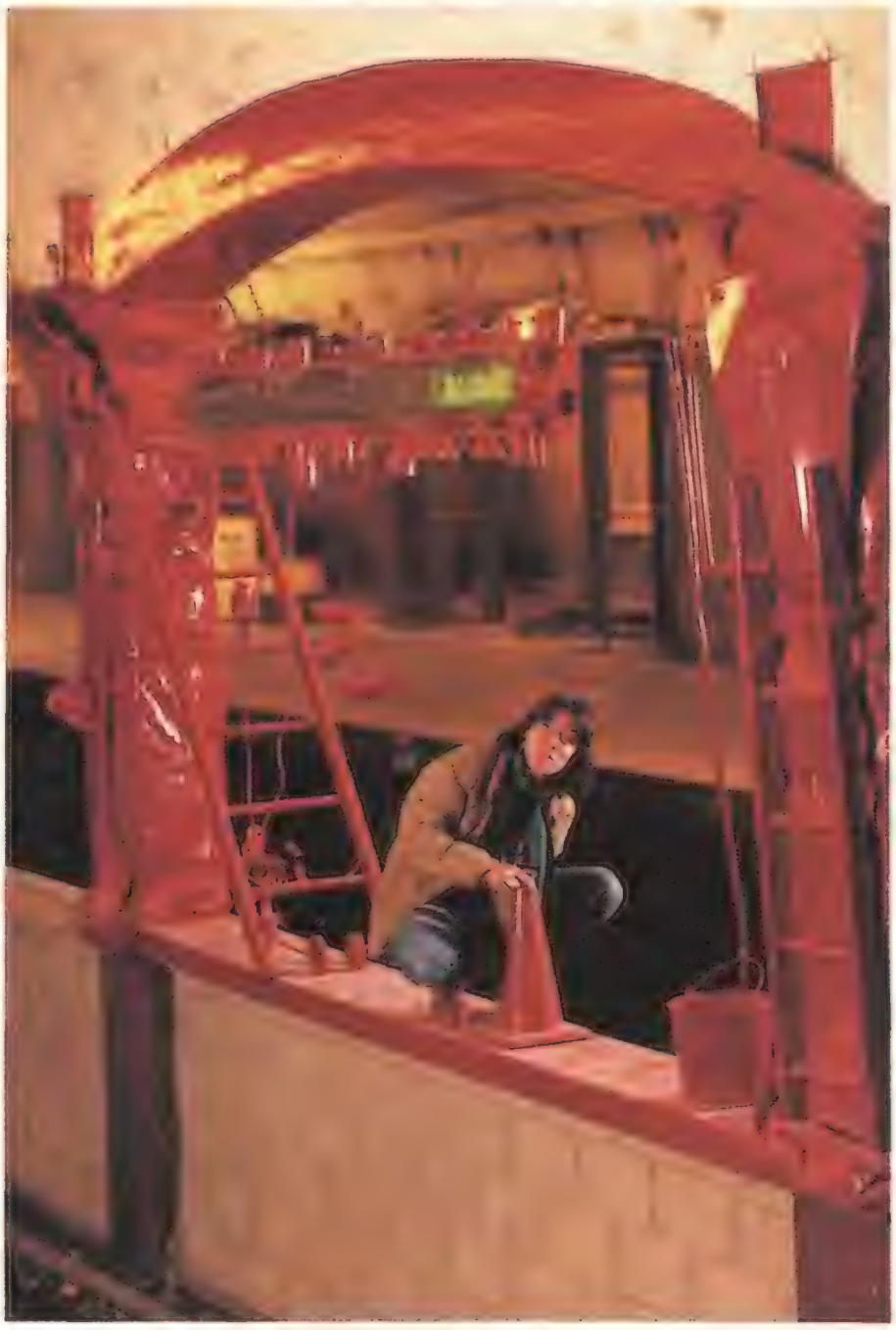
Works already installed, produced by artists from around the country, range from Sam Gilliam's huge painted-aluminum abstract sculpture mounted above the outbound trains at the Davis Square station (one MBTA worker says "It looks like two trains running into each other") to Susumu Shingu's 46-foot-high red windmill outside the Porter station and Joyce Kozloff's 80-foot ceramic tile mural at Harvard station, incorporating such New England folk-art motifs as tombstone reliefs and weather vanes.

Subway art is already familiar in Europe, where Moscow's subway is famous for its cathedral-like stations with ornate marble walls, mosaics and chandeliers. Soviet officials recently admitted that the 126-station system—about one-third the size of New York's, but carrying twice as many passengers—is strained. Newer European subways often are more efficient, and just as nice to look at. Brussels' stations, for instance, almost vibrate with art, like Paul Van Hoeydonck's 16 golden-bronze sculptures of human forms, suspended above the trains at the Count of Flanders station, as if a flock of souls were swooping down the tunnel.

On the other hand, high-art subway stations are sur-

Janowitz wanted to flash "a moment of recognition" into commuters' minds as they waited for buses.

Alejandro and Moira Sina's *The End of the Red Line,* a light-shedding neon sculpture, glows at Alewife.



Mags Harries observes installation of temporary work at Central Square in deserted early-morning hours.

prising in Boston, noted for Colonial graveyards, acres of red brick, the star-crossed Red Sox and Filene's basement. How this bastion of haughty "Brahmins" and avid Celtics basketball fans pioneered subway art is a saga of citizen pull, political push, tussles among bureaucrats, architects, contractors and unions, and the agony and ecstasy of artists.

Arts On The Line, as the project is called, originated in 1978 with the Cambridge Arts Council, community arts activists who saw the $574-million Red Line expansion, mostly through Cambridge, as a nifty opportunity. A year before, the U.S. Department of Transportation had authorized arts grants for federally financed construction, and the Cambridge enthusiasts urged MBTA officials to apply. At first, the bureaucrats were dubious.

"One question was, who needs art in a subway station?" says John Powers, senior project manager for the construction, who looks comfortable in a hard hat. He was a pivotal figure who time and again resolved conflicts with a kind of Solomonic finesse. "Also, I had been involved with one previous public art project, so I knew a little about the complexities of dealing with ar-

Of painted aluminum, Sam Gilliam's *Sculpture with a D* is scrubbed at platform of Davis Square station.

Kathleen Pletcher with her fiberglass cocoons, a temporary installation while station is renovated.

tistic-type people wearing short pants and high heels."

Contemplating burrowing through rock under a congested city's streets, MBTA general manager James O'Leary initially regarded the arguments for subterranean murals and sculptures much as a Percheron hauling a wagonful of gravel might regard a butterfly fluttering about its eyelashes. "When we began struggling with budgets and construction programs, we saw it as a burden, added on," he says.

Art with clout

But the Red Line extension would be passing many artists' homes and studios. And Cambridge, site of Harvard and MIT, wields political clout. Kitty Dukakis, the governor's wife, was an advocate. And Joan Mondale, wife of the then Vice President, visited Boston to argue for art in subway stations, and she lobbied for the project in Washington. "We quickly saw the arts as a way to bring in the neighborhoods, to make them part of the project," says O'Leary. "Besides, we actually have been in the forefront—this is the country's oldest subway, built in 1897."

Boston's flirtation with innovation was brief, however. Today, the city's subway system is a cobwebby network of musty caverns where archaic cars rumble between dingy stations. At one infamous interchange, where the subway ascends to the surface and becomes a trolley, riders once were required to ante up exact-fare change in order to *leave* the train, prompting the Kingston Trio's popular late-'50s ditty about unfortunate Charlie, who forgot to bring change and now forever rides beneath the streets of Boston, "the man who never returned."

Despite that chilling possibility, Boston's subways are less unnerving than New York's, which can evoke a descent into Hell. But Boston's system, more akin to Rome's, which was seemingly installed at the same time as the catacombs, is a century away from the slick subways of Montreal or Washington, where streamlined trains whoosh silently into ultramodern stations that might be docks for the Starship Enterprise. Nor is it in the same league as Paris' Métro, so glamorous that the little tickets, yellow with a brown magnetic stripe, have become the motif for all sorts of chic Yuppie paraphernalia, from yellow-and-brown umbrellas to key chains and even men's boxer shorts.

Clearly, when MBTA officials decided to modernize the Boston subways with new stations, it was high time. Federal regulations would have allowed shifting up to two percent of the construction budget to the arts; final MBTA allocation was .05 percent. The total devoted to artworks from the MBTA budget was $695,000, with extra funds from other sources, such as community donations, covering administration and

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David Phillips pours bronze at Somerville studio. His boulders sculpture is installed at Porter Square.

In Groton, Paul Matisse works on *Pythagorus*, musical piece, part of an assemblage, for Kendall Square.

temporary art installations and "happenings" to soothe citizen annoyance with disruptive construction.

Recently, for instance, at the Red Line's grubby Washington Street station, startled commuters saw people scattered about the station (disguised professional dancers) suddenly break into a tap-dance routine. The performance was part of the MBTA's efforts to buoy passengers' spirits during an $80-million renovation of Orange and Red Line stations.

Art was merely a drop in the MBTA's funding bucket. However, it would prove a voracious chewer of time: "We had meetings and meetings, trying to keep people from taking two-by-fours to each other," says John Powers, who can now look at one good aspect of the struggle. "I think every artist grew in business understanding."

Each station's artists were selected by a committee of three art professionals, to assure quality art. At the Davis Square station, for instance, the committee decided to sandblast poems into the brick floor, including Emily Dickinson's famous lines that begin: "I'm Nobody! Who are you? / Are you—Nobody—too?" "One man fought strenuously against that poem, saying it would demean the public," says Pallas Lombardi, director of Arts On The Line for the Cambridge City Council during much of the construction. Nevertheless, the poem is now inscribed in the station floor, with no noticeable diminution of hurrying commuters' self-esteem.

Artists selected from a slide bank as potential contractees had to win committee agreement that their proposals met certain criteria: artistic excellence, appropriateness to the site, 75 years' durability, minimal maintenance, vandal resistance. Then their ordeal might begin, for all involved in a public arts project—artists, architects, construction workers, contractors, engineers, bureaucrats and politicians—sometimes crash head-on. And the players least likely to be wearing hard hats are the artists.

For instance, dominating the Harvard station's concourse is a 114-foot-long mosaic of shimmering purples and blues, transected by a thin red line. This stained-glass artwork, by Gyorgy Kepes, which enlivens a refurbished tunnel where buses stop, almost succumbed

Free-lance writer Richard Wolkomir, a frequent contributor to SMITHSONIAN, *wrote most recently about traffic jams and physicist Jearl Walker.*

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Decorative bronze plaques of creatures by Nancy Webb are scattered throughout the mezzanine at Alewife.

to a struggle that had nothing to do with the artist.

"Before we had today's selection process for the art, some architects were hostile and some tried to jump ahead of us," says Charles Steward, the MBTA's assistant director for construction. "At Harvard Square," he recalls, "the architects commissioned Kepes without asking us. We didn't want to be run by architects, but the Cambridge Arts Council said it was a good selection, so we didn't throw it out. We just slapped the architects' wrists."

"The toll of being a public artist is phenomenal," says Mags Harries. "You choose to be an artist to have the freedom to express yourself, but doing public art you feel owned and controlled by other people. The workers think you're a prima donna." And then she notes: "Artists aren't trained to work collaboratively."

For Harvard Square station's outdoor plaza, Dimitri Hadzi made an abstract granite sculpture, 24 feet high, in bands of pinks, grays and blacks. "It's called *Omphalos*, inspired by Delphi, the navel of the universe, because I see Harvard Square as the navel of the educational universe," Hadzi says. "The banding of the colors relates to the learning centers of Italy, like Bologna and Padua, where the old educational buildings were banded."

Abstract sculpture in the old square triggered criticism. But Hadzi's undoing, almost, was international politics. "Dimitri never had the budget to do so colossal a piece, so he got outside funding," says Arline Sanford, the MBTA's Arts On The Line coordinator. But the patron had some connection with South Africa —"Cambridge wouldn't allow funding associated with South Africa and so Dimitri got himself between a rock and a hard place," says Sanford. Eventually, he found another patron, which pleased the MBTA: "We got the model, drawings and sculpture of an internationally acclaimed artist for about $30,000, and the work is appraised at $500,000," says Sanford.

Good for what ails you

The public is appreciative. As one slouch-hatted and gray-mustached passenger, gazing at Hadzi's sculpture, told an Arts On The Line videotaper: "I think it lightens the subway and it has a tendency to cause people to be a little more relaxed, and to get along with the heterogeneous conglomeration of idiosyncrasies that you run into in a subway station, including myself."

Frequently, artists and contractors clashed, often over deadlines. "Some of the artists made themselves disliked, with the contractors asking, 'What are these beatniks doing on my job?' " says John Powers. "An artist would say, 'Could you hold up pouring that wall while I do my piece again?' As you can well imagine,

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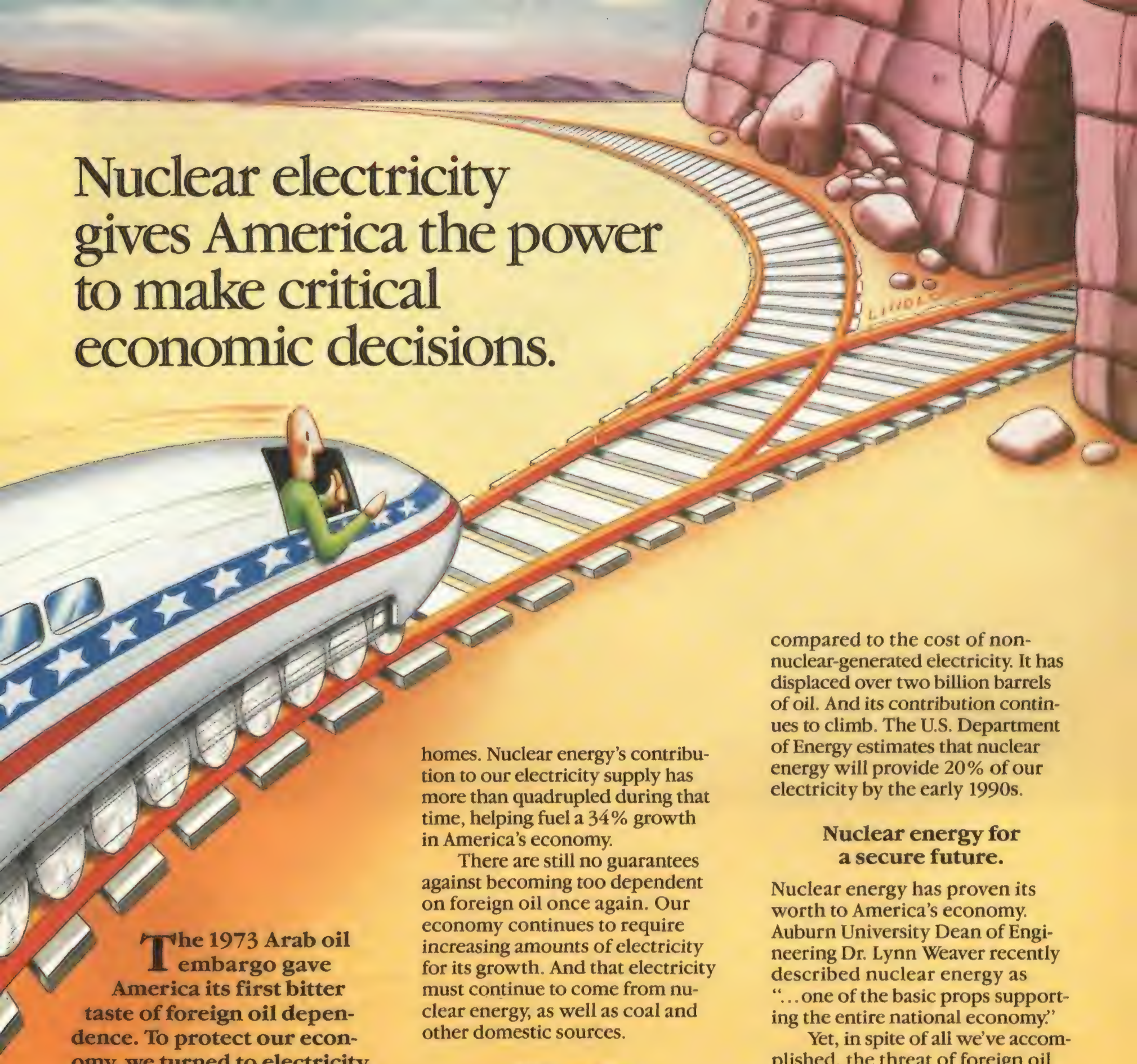

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Project partners, from left: William Wainwright, Pallas Lombardi, Arnie Berman, James O'Leary, John Powers (with hard hat), Harry Ellenzweig (with blueprints), Arline Sanford, MBTA arts coordinator.

the contractor would have a colorful response to that."

At Alewife, says Powers, an engineer became irritated with artist David Davison, who was installing a wall mural. "One day Davison drove his little VW bug down the four-foot-thick concrete ramp to where he was installing the tiles and the engineer made a big show of putting his head in his hands," Powers says. " 'You drove your car on my ramp!' the engineer cried. 'Now I'm going to have to do a structural analysis of this whole side of the station, and we may have to take down this half of the building!' " The odd thing, says Powers, is that even as the engineer fumed, concrete buggies were moving up and down the ramp. "Each wheel on one of those buggies weighed more than the VW," he says. "I guess it was a certain amount of fun to bait the artists a little."

As Arline Sanford sums it up reflectively: "The people working on this project were unused to being with one another."

But many an artist had merrier experiences. "This was a wonderful commission for me—truly my own work," says David Phillips, who sliced open boulders, replacing cut-out sections with their counterparts cast in bronze, for Porter station's outdoor plaza.

William Wainwright, a white-bearded sculptor who designed a shimmering mobile of aluminum and polyester film that sends colored sunlight into the Porter Square station, also has no complaints. "Public art is an opportunity you take when you get it," he says. "My piece had to be put out of reach of a kid waving a hockey stick, higher than I'd place it in a more genteel environment, but the construction workers liked my piece, because it lights that station up, throwing out rainbows as big as Volkswagens." Wainwright is a former architect and associate of the brilliant designer Buckminster Fuller. "Others had more trouble with the construction people than I did because I know more about it," he says.

Architects and artists had to iron out their differences, too. Pallas Lombardi cites as an example the vast Alewife station, where subways, commuter trains and buses meet, a Taj Mahal designed by Harry Ellenzweig. One Alewife artwork is an environmental composition by Richard Fleischner, blending terrain,

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Mags Harries' Park Street installation, featuring refrigerator at center, pays homage to everyday objects.

sculpture, shrubs and trees. "Harry insisted that Richard not plant trees along the garage, saying bus exhaust would kill them, but I think perhaps he didn't want trees hiding his beautiful garage," says Lombardi.

Ellenzweig, who says he didn't worry about a few trees obscuring his structure, insists that—if anything—he wants *more* art in Alewife station. "With art, you're trying to make those long walls more interesting," he says. "I wanted David Davison's tiles to be three-dimensional, for instance, so people could *feel* them—I wanted the artists to be even bolder!"

In the end, in fact, the artists may be more appreciated by the builders than they know. At Alewife station, for instance, Bill Keyser created free-form wooden benches that curve and swoop, utilitarian, yet fine sculpture. When Keyser delivered the benches and prepared to assemble them, the carpenters threatened to strike because he was unknowingly flaunting union rules. Keyser relinquished the job.

"I watched the carpenters when they carried the benches in," says John Powers. "I think they really understood the quality of that artwork—they were treating those benches with reverence."

Frequently, the artists were forced to respect the skills of the workers, too. Powers cites the sculpture of 1,000 red neon tubes that Alejandro and Moira Sina hung over the tracks at Alewife station. "Alejandro is a good artist, but a lousy electrician," he says. "We couldn't get those neon tubes to work right until we got one of our unartistic electricians, a guy with a pair of pliers, to go up there and make it go."

Ultimately, public art's judge is the public. Indications are that subway riders appreciate their collection. Mags Harries, for instance, constantly receives in the mail gifts of flattened gloves that fans have found in the streets. Pallas Lombardi says people have told her they bring out-of-town visitors to see the subway stations. The MBTA's Charles Steward also rates Arts On The Line high: "I'd give it 30 percent of impact for .05 percent of cost," he says.

"I think the art is fun—a heck of a good thing to do, making it part of everybody's daily life," says Alma Triner, a Cambridge executive. "I used to be unwilling to ride the subway, but the art says, 'Why not?' It makes you feel it's a safe place."

On a recent morning, a young man with a blond mustache, a backpack full of textbooks, and a red-and-black checked lumberjack shirt worn over a "Harvard University" T-shirt, dashed down the ramp at Harvard station toward the rumble of an incoming train. He abruptly stopped to stare at Joyce Kozloff's tile mural, but only for a split second. His eyes strayed back toward the approaching train and he galloped away. Art had crooned its come-hither song, but the monotonal chant of a schedule had won.

A few hours later that afternoon, however, at the Davis Square station, a man in his twenties wearing an army surplus jacket and jeans stood with his feet spread, staring down transfixed at one of the poems inscribed in the bricks, a verse called "Standing Up," by Erica Funkhouser: "Like a tree that has been chosen/ for the owl's home,/ I stand up differently today."

A man in a business suit sitting on a bench observed, "It's better than graffiti!" "It depends if it's good graffiti," said the young man, frowning over the poem at his feet. "This is very individual," he added. "It seems to be out of character for an urban place like this—it seems to be about individualism." He walked thoughtfully away, apparently mulling over individualistic trees and homemaking owls.

Few graffiti; only one broken nose

Probably the most resounding vote of approval comes from the most worrisome public segment: vandals. Artists made their pieces as easily de-graffitized, as unwhackable and as thick-skinned as possible. Harvard station's stained glass, for instance, is one inch thick, able to withstand a hurled beer bottle. Even so, everyone is astonished by the nearly total absence of damage to the artworks. At Davis Square, the nose of one of the life-size statues of neighborhood residents that James Tyler sculpted was broken (and replaced by the artist), and a few graffiti on the statues were promptly cleaned by neighborhood residents. Mags Harries periodically removes cigarette butts from her gloves. And once Alewife's neon tube sculpture was slightly damaged, but the perpetrators were caught:

"Some pigeons flew through there and broke a few tubes," says Arline Sanford. Otherwise, even in the toughest neighborhoods, the art has been vandal-free.

"I think it's because the art gives the community a sense that the station belongs to them, and so it's less trashed," says Harry Ellenzweig, offering an assessment echoed by all involved with the project. At least 15 other cities around the country are now emulating Boston's Arts On The Line. And the MBTA is moving enthusiastically ahead with plans for more art in its own stations.

In his home in a former church in Groton, Massachusetts, for instance, sculptor Paul Matisse is working out the dynamics of the musical sculpture he is creating for the new Kendall Square station, now under construction. Fifteen feet high, it will hang between the tracks. In one section, huge hammers will strike suspended sound pipes when subway users pull handles on the walls. Another section will be an aluminum ring that produces bell-like sounds. And a third, a hanging metal sheet, will rumble like thunder. Matisse calls his assemblage *The Kendall Band.*

"I don't think in terms of public or private art—I make a piece to celebrate some natural phenomenon," says Matisse, who happens to be the grandson of Henri Matisse. He gently strikes hammer against pipe to produce a sonorous ring that makes his pet rabbit stop hopping about the studio to listen. "When I looked at the space, it seemed so clear it should use sound, because subway sounds are no aural pleasure."

Subways aren't visual delights, either—at least, not in the past. Down you would go, into the grimy gloom, where a fetid gust up the tunnel would precede the train's arrival, perhaps wrapping a discarded newspaper around your ankle like a leech. Today, however, the new wave of subway art is making the once dreary underground so chic that cities sometimes rent out their stations for trendy gatherings. Baltimore's Center Stage theater group, for instance, held its 21st birthday party at the Charles Center station, under the station's red-neon sculpture.

As the theater group's director put it: "People never thought of being able to go into a subway for fun, but it was the place to be in Baltimore that night."

Harries teamed up with sound artist Richard Lerman to present live art performance with her Park Street sculpture as a focal point. Performance, "Know No Bounds," featured students in variety of guises.

In February 1944, clouds and fog billow around ruined Monte Cassino abbey after bombs had fallen.

By Otto Friedrich

Monte Cassino: a story of death and resurrection

In 1944, through miscalculation of war and sheer mischance, the Benedictines' famous abbey was blasted into rubble

"Like a lion it crouched," the young American lieutenant thought as he looked up toward the great abbey on top of the mountain, "dominating all approaches, watching every move made by the armies down below." This was Monte Cassino, the mother of all Western monasticism in Europe, created by St. Benedict himself more than 14 centuries ago. Now it stood blocking the U.S. Fifth Army's march on Nazi-occupied Rome, just 80 miles to the northwest. It would have to be destroyed.

The lieutenant, Harold L. Bond, was surprised by both the grandeur and the serenity of the doomed monastery. "Its stone walls were yellow and unexpectedly warm on that cold January day," he wrote. "The sun reflected from some of the glass in the windows, and the great towers and dome were nobly outlined against the sky. . . . Some soldiers in the yard told me that the Germans were using it for an observation post, and that was the reason why they had been able to fire with such deadly accuracy on all of our positions."

Bond and his men had clawed their way up that mountain, struggling through snow and rain and fro-

Rebuilt "where it was, as it was," by the Italian government, the abbey was reconsecrated in 1964.

zen mud, short of food and even ammunition. The American attackers finally captured a ridge within 1,000 yards of the monastery's wall, but could go no farther. Though they took 80-percent casualties, every attack was beaten back by the German defenders. When the shattered American force had to be replaced by New Zealanders for what was hoped to be the final assault, the monastery still stood there, still watchful as a lion.

"Oh, it was malignant," said an English sergeant serving with the New Zealanders. "It was evil somehow. I don't know how a monastery can be evil, but it was looking at you. It was all-devouring if you like—a sun-bleached color, grim. It had a terrible hold on us soldiers. . . . It had to be destroyed."

And so, at 9:28 on the sunny and nearly cloudless morning of February 15, 1944, a flight of 142 B-17 Flying Fortresses unloaded 287 tons of explosive bombs on the undefended monastery, along with 66 tons of incendiary bombs. Great clouds of smoke rose to cover the top of the mountain. Later that day, 87 medium bombers returned with a second round of devastation. The total: 493 tons of bombs, the heaviest attack ever launched against a single building.

Through a series of military miscalculations, the raids were staged at the wrong time and on the wrong day. The troops involved were not ready to begin their assault, and when the attack belatedly got under way, it failed. The bombing that was supposed to shorten the Allied march to Rome probably lengthened it. All that the bombing accomplished was to reduce St. Benedict's monastery, which once had preserved the relics of civilization through the long centuries of the Dark Ages, to smoking rubble.

I was driving through that region not long ago, on the superhighway from Rome to Naples, and I had made a mental note to watch for some sign of the ruins of Monte Cassino, perhaps some roadside plaques marking the spot where the monastery had once stood. But the bone-white gleam of the stone walls caught my eye from miles away, that jagged wall outlined against the brownish green of the surrounding mountains and the serene blue of the Italian sky. Driving closer, I saw that the whole monastery was still there. Americans

St. Benedict, creator of rules for monasticism, chose site for abbey as spiritual center of Order in 529.

had not been the first to destroy Monte Cassino—Lombards and Saracens had destroyed it, too—and the monastery had taken as its motto the words *Succisa Virescit*, meaning "struck down, it will live again."

So it has all been rebuilt, stone by stone, just exactly as it once was. And over the one entrance through the ten-foot-thick walls into the domain of St. Benedict, there is a message printed in large and blood-red letters. It says, in its scarlet letters, just one word: PAX.

St. Benedict would approve, one likes to think, but perhaps not. He was a combative man, after all, and much convinced of the rightness of his cause. When he first came here, in A.D. 529, he found many of the inhabitants still loyal to the long-outlawed worship of the Gods of Olympus. On top of the mountain, as Pope Gregory I wrote about Benedict in his *Dialogues*, "stood a very old temple, in which the ignorant country people still worshipped Apollo as their pagan ancestors had done, and went on offering superstitious and idolatrous sacrifices in groves dedicated to various demons." Benedict's reaction was forceful. He destroyed the revered statue of Apollo, overturned the altar and cut down the sacred groves.

Gregory's *Dialogues*, written in about 594, some 50 years after Benedict's death, is the only real source of fairly sparse biographical information about the saint. Nobody knew exactly when St. Benedict was born, probably about 480. In any case Rome was still flourishing when young Benedict first arrived there, and he

Otto Friedrich has written books about Berlin in the 1920s and Henry Adams' wife, Clover. His latest: Hollywood, City of Nets *(Harper & Row).*

During bombing preparation for Fifth Army attack, the abbey and the mountain are obscured from view.

was shocked by its flagrant ways. "When he saw many of his fellow students falling headlong into vice," Gregory writes, he "gave up home and inheritance, and resolved to embrace the religious life." He lived for years in a cave near the ruins of Nero's villa at Subiaco, and gradually the word of his sanctity spread. He attracted converts and disciples not only by what Gregory calls his "zealous preaching" but also by performing miracles. These were of the traditional sort,

In the foreground, visible through the smoke,
are the town of Cassino and Castle Hill above it.

retrieving lost objects or mending broken ones, healing the sick with a touch of his hand. But he was always the organizer, the commander. Benedict founded 12 monasteries, then moved on to his destined headquarters at Monte Cassino.

Cassino, the town, at the foot of mountains that define the Liri Valley, has been fortified since time immemorial. Casinum was its Roman name, and it sat astride the Via Casilina, now known as Route 6, still one of the main roads south to Naples. Hannibal occupied Casinum during his ill-fated attempt to overthrow Rome in 211 B.C. Entirely within the walls of the ancient fort, some 1,700 feet above the town, Benedict built his ultimate monastery. And here he wrote the *Regula,* or *Rule,* which for 14 centuries has served as a guide and manual for the monastic life.

"My words are meant for you, whoever you are, who, laying aside your own will, take up the all-powerful

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General von Senger und Etterlin (opening door for Abbot Diamare) made some effort to preserve the abbey's treasures.

and righteous arms of obedience to fight under the true King, the Lord Jesus Christ." So begins *The Rule* and one hears again that Benedictine note of spiritual combat. But Benedict was an eminently practical man. One reason for the triumph of his *Rule* was its advice on how to organize a communal life amid the confusions of the sixth century, how to arrange a compromise between the ascetic ideals of the Eastern hermits and the demands of peasant life. The monks were to rise and pray at regular intervals between midnight and dawn, but then went out to work in the fields, raising crops and harvesting them. *Laborare est orare.* The monks were to avoid eating meat, but Benedict was not averse to their drinking a modest amount of wine along with their bread and fresh vegetables. "Though we read that wine is not at all suitable for monks," he wrote with characteristic pragmatism, "in our day it is not possible to persuade the monks of this truth."

Nearing death, Benedict told a disciple that God had warned him that "this entire monastery shall fall into the hands of the barbarians." And so it happened that when the invading Lombards sacked and destroyed Monte Cassino in 568, the forewarned monks all escaped into the night and fled to Rome. They brought with them only the manuscript of Benedict's *Regula,* their official measuring cups for bread and wine, and their motto that what had been struck down would live again. As refugees in Rome, they brought to Pope Gregory not only a skillfully organized system of communal life but a vocation to serve that Pope who had given them shelter. When in 597 Gregory decided to send an envoy to the pagan shores of Britain to undertake the conversion of King Ethelbert of Kent, it was natural for him to turn to the Benedictine Augustine, who went and established the first Christian church at Canterbury.

Meanwhile, the plundered shrine at Monte Cassino was still in ruins. Not until the year 718, more than a century after the Lombard attack, did Pope Gregory II send a monk named Petronax of Brescia to begin a rebuilding that eventually resulted in a

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three-nave basilica. Saracen marauders sacked it in 843. The monks fled once again. Another century passed before Abbot Aligernus led the monks back to Monte Cassino and once again rebuilt the ruins, this time nobler than ever.

It was in the 11th century that Monte Cassino reached the height of its grandeur. Its control of the surrounding fields and vineyards extended for miles. Three monks from Monte Cassino became popes (Stephen IX, Victor III and Gelasius II; there have been 24 Benedictine popes in all). The only event needed to complete this new cycle of rebirth and revival was a new moment of destruction. In 1349, an earthquake cracked open the walls of the monastery and brought the great towers tumbling to the ground.

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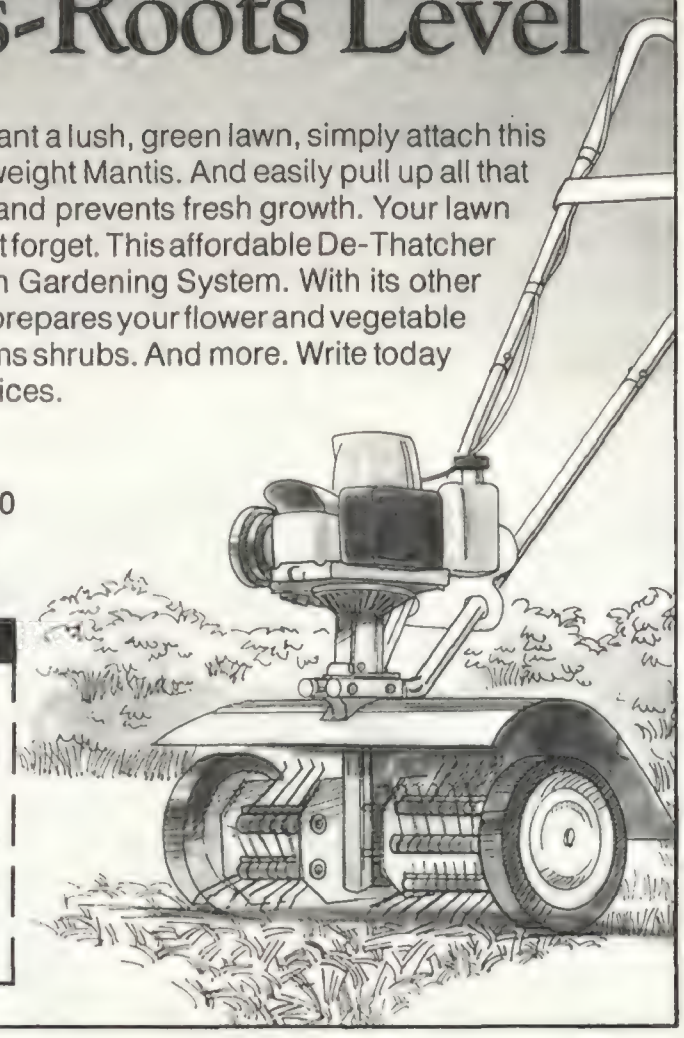

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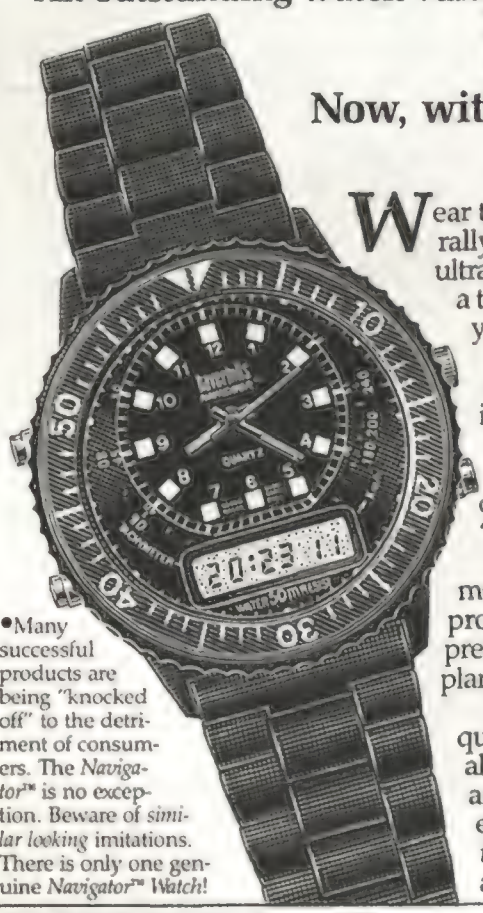

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parked in the snowy hills on the far side of the Liri Valley, he saw only the prospect of misery and suffering for his men. "When I think back on the weeks and finally months of searing struggle," he later wrote, "the biting cold, the torrents of rain and snow, the lakes of mud that sucked down machines and men, and, most of all, the deeply dug fortifications in which the Germans waited for us in the hills, it seems to me that no soldiers in history were ever given a more difficult assignment than the Fifth Army in that winter of 1944."

The man who gave them that assignment was Mark Clark himself, an ambitious man all too new to the hardships of combat. Son of a career officer, Clark had graduated from West Point in 1917 just in time to see a few days of actual fighting in World War I. Early in the second war his chief role had been as a planner of military training, an assignment in which he impressed Chief of Staff George Marshall and made a friend of Marshall's protégé, Dwight Eisenhower. Eisenhower had asked for him to help plan the North African invasions of 1942, and now, at 46, Clark was the youngest lieutenant general in the U.S.

Theater commander Harold Alexander (with Ike) finally took responsibility.

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Army. This was not necessarily the best recommendation for the officer assigned to command the U.S. Fifth Army on its march to the capture of Rome. The Fifth Army included not only veteran British and Canadian troops but Gurkhas from the Himalayas, Moroccan and Algerian soldiers under French command, and some remnants of the Polish army.

Facing these polyglot invaders stood about 40,000 of the best troops in the German army, organized in the three divisions of the XIV Panzer Korps under the command of General Frido von Senger und Etterlin. A professional soldier of 53, Senger had served with distinction in both the victory over France and later at Stalingrad. He was also a Rhodes Scholar, a devout Catholic and a lay member of the Order of St. Benedict, and one of those who believed it is a soldier's duty to fight as well as possible even in a doomed and disgraced cause. "According to the creed of Thomas Aquinas," Senger wrote, "no man can be blamed for the crimes of others insofar as he has no influence over them. However, the power is not in the hands of the generals but of Hitler and the German people who have voted him into power. . . ."

One of the major powers in Hitler's hands was the authority to decide whether and where to make a defense against the Allied invasion. The Italians had signed an armistice on September 3, 1943, shortly after the conquest of Sicily. Following that, the British Eighth Army crossed the Straits of Messina unopposed. Hitler drew a line—the so-called Gustav Line—that would enable the Wehrmacht to organize a defense south of Rome. The Gustav Line, to be reinforced by mines, pillboxes, machine-gun nests and barbed wire, extended all across the mountainous Italian peninsula and through the center of Cassino.

Not only was the monastery itself one of the great art treasures of the world, but its library was filled with priceless medieval manuscripts. Indeed, the Italian authorities in Rome, who still lived under the illusion that the monastery would remain safe from attack, had shipped other art there for safekeeping in underground vaults. From the Naples Museum came 11 Titians, including the gorgeous *Danae*, Bruegel's *Parable of the Blind* and the only two Goyas in Italy. And more: 30 crates of things unearthed at Pompeii, a crate of ancient coins from Syracuse, two boxes of Keats and Shelley manuscripts from the Keats house in Rome.

In their book, *Monte Cassino*, the most detailed and interesting account of these events, David Hapgood and David Richardson note that the obvious vulnerability of this hoard was at first realized only by a Dr. Maximilian Becker, who had been an archaeology student before the war and now served as a medic in the Hermann Goering Division. When Becker heard what had been stored at Monte Cassino, he made a private visit to persuade the abbot, Gregorio Diamare, to let the Germans remove his treasures for safekeeping in the north. The abbot, a small, plump man of 79, at first declined. He lacked authority, he said; besides, God's will would be done. But when the advancing Americans were only 50 miles away, and the town of Cassino had already been hit by the first Allied air raids, the abbot gave in. The Germans loaded up truckload after truckload of art and carted them away to their supply depot at Spoleto. Only then did Becker, having pledged his personal honor to the abbot for the safety of the treasures, learn that Col. Julius Schlegel, the division's ambitious transport officer, was now currying favor with Reichsmarschall Goering by offering him the pick of the Monte Cassino pictures. (After the war the Allies retrieved Goering's loot from Nazi hiding places in Austria.)

What the Germans called "clearing" the abbey also meant clearing out its inhabitants. Abbot Diamare, who had ruled over Monte Cassino

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After bombing, the gutted abbey, which Germans had not garrisoned, was used for defense against ground attack.

for 34 years, refused to leave his post in the face of the coming attack, but the Germans forcibly removed all but ten of the monks and more than a hundred refugees who had already taken shelter there after nearby German positions were heavily shelled. More hungry refugees soon began to gather outside the walls, swarms of them. A small group of terrified women finally pounded on the gate, crying to be let in. They were refused. The women threatened to set the gate afire. After that the abbot gave way. The gate was opened. Eventually about 800 peasants came seeking safety in the abbey.

One of the monks kept a diary:

"Jan. 20: Around seven o'clock hellish firing started on the plain, which looked as if it were erupting all over; an awful noise shook the whole monastery. . . . This was the first great battle for Cassino.

"Jan. 21: . . . during the night, an Anglo-American shell had penetrated the basilica. . . . A cloud of dust covevered everything; the confessionals were smashed and so were some marbles.

"Jan. 24: . . . Hellish firing started at around 9:30 and continued intense until about 11:30. Several shells fell on the monastery. . . . Fragments flew all over the place."

Mark Clark had launched the great offensive by ordering the Texan 36th Division to cross the Rapido River just east of Cassino on the night of January 20, but the attack was beaten back with heavy casualties. French and Moroccan troops finally led the way across the Rapido, much farther upstream, and then Clark sent his 34th Division to climb the heights 1,700 feet above Cassino and seize the monastery. The attackers succeeded in scaling the heights, but then came deadlock. By the time the New Zealanders crept up to relieve the Americans at the end of a week's hard fighting, they found the hillside strewn with frozen corpses. Fifty Americans still guarding the uppermost ridge were so exhausted that they could not even stand and had to be carried down the mountainside on stretchers. And the snow kept falling.

On February 12, the New Zealand commander, Lt. Gen. Bernard Freyberg, called up Clark's headquarters requesting that the monastery be

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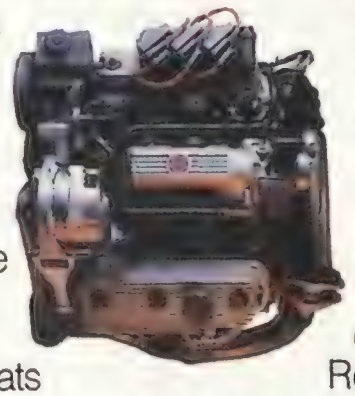

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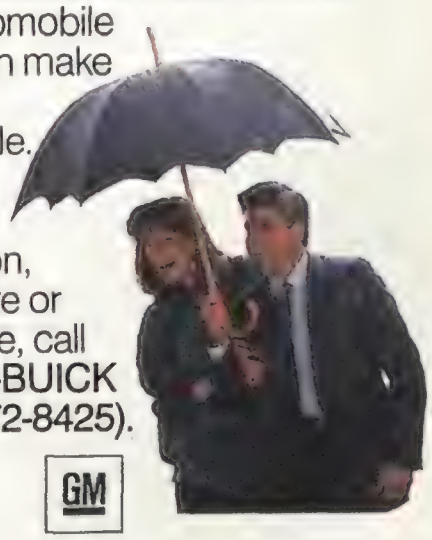

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bombed before his 4th Indian Division attacked it. "The monastery is not on the list of targets," said Clark's chief of staff, Maj. Gen. Alfred Gruenther. "It is on my list of targets . . ." Freyberg retorted. "I want it bombed."

Just a month earlier General Eisenhower had tried to create guidelines about destruction of historic monuments but those guidelines remained ambiguous. "If we have to choose between destroying a famous building and sacrificing our own men, then our men's lives count infinitely more and the buildings must go," Eisenhower declared. "But the phrase 'military necessity' is sometimes used where it would be more truthful to speak of military convenience or even of personal convenience. . . ."

What, then, is "military necessity," except what some general says it is? When the Americans were leading the advance toward Cassino, none of their generals had demanded the destruction of the monastery. Now here was General Freyberg of New Zealand arguing "military necessity." But Freyberg was not just another general. As Clark would tell David Richardson in an interview later, his own superior, Sir Harold Alexander, British commander of the Allied Armies in Italy, had told him, "Freyberg is a big man in New Zealand, a big man in the Commonwealth. We treat him with kid gloves and you must do the same."

Freyberg was indeed a big man—tall, rugged, overwhelmingly gung ho—and his nation's leading hero in two wars. Wounded four times in France during World War I, he was now 50 years old, but since 1940 he had led his New Zealand Corps through arduous combat in the Egyptian desert, Crete, North Africa and Italy. (One division lost 18,500 of 43,500 men.)

"As brave as a lion," according to one of his fellow officers, "but no planner of battles. . . ." Freyberg, in the present circumstances, was a man exceedingly hard for Clark to handle.

Battle site shown from behind advancing Allies; the Germans were concentrated along Gustav Line, in town and on mountaintop.

One problem was that the New Zealanders were free to go home (as the Australians had done) anytime their leaders decided that these troops were needed for defense against the Japanese. (The previous spring the New Zealand Government had seriously considered doing so.) Another difficulty for Clark lay in the shaky situation of the new Allied beachhead at Anzio, about 50 miles up the coast, behind the Gustav Line. Originally, Clark had pressed the disastrous crossing of the Rapido on January 20 to divert German attention from the prospective Anzio landing on January 22; now, when the Allies found themselves pinned down on the Anzio beachhead, they needed new pressure against Cassino or they risked defeat in both places.

So when Gruenther had to respond to Freyberg's demand for bombing the monastery, he had to deal with commanders much concerned about other things. Alexander's chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Sir John Harding, called Gruenther later that day with a secondhand version of the commander's verdict: "General Alexander has decided that the monastery should be bombed if General Freyberg considers it a military necessity. He regrets that the building should be destroyed, but he has faith in Freyberg's judgment." Considering the explicitness of that decision, Gruenther sounded almost insubordinate in his defense of his own commander's view. "General Clark does not think that the building should be bombed," he said, according to his own recollection of the argument. "He believes it will endanger the lives of many civilian refugees in the building, and that a bombing will not destroy its value as a fortification for the enemy." General Harding was icy. "General Alexander has made his position quite clear on this point," he said to Gruenther. "If General Clark desires to talk personally to General Alexander about the subject, I'm sure that General Alexander will be pleased to discuss it with him."

Top American leaders may have been keenly aware of Italian and Catholic sensibilities back home in the Presidential election year of 1944; they were also aware of the American press' noisy commitment to the welfare of the ordinary G.I. Any signs of favoritism brought trouble. "CLARK ORDER PROHIBITS 5TH ARMY

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FROM ATTACKING CHURCH PROPERTY," one critical headline in the *New York Times* announced over a dispatch from C. L. Sulzberger on the fighting at Monte Cassino. "There seems little doubt," Sulzberger's file went on, "that [the Germans] are employing it as an artillery observation post. . . . The Fifth Army's abstention from shelling Monte Cassino Abbey . . . hampered our advance greatly since the whole hillside beneath it is defended. . . . Many lives may be lost."

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Gen. Francis Tuker wanted to bypass abbey, making bomb attack unnecessary.

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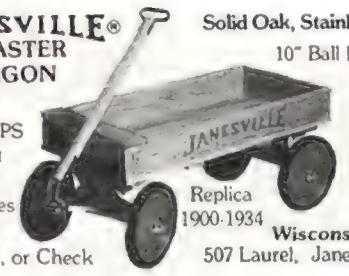

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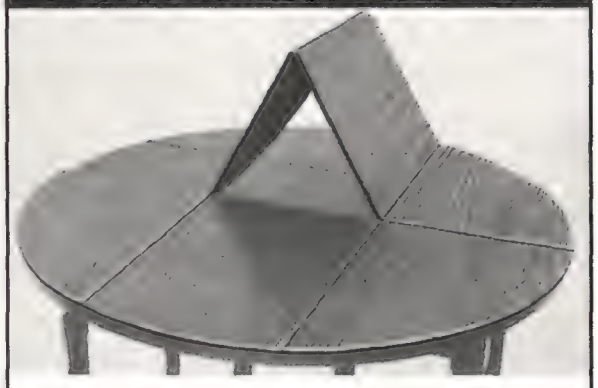

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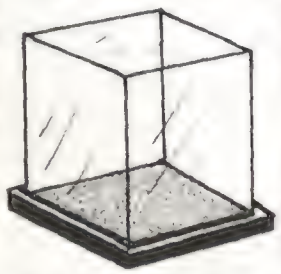

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third British, two-thirds Indian and Gurkha. A waspish professional soldier (also an artist and a poet), Tuker was one of the few generals on the scene who actually had experience in mountain warfare—on the Northwest Frontier of India. He had a low opinion of most of the officers who now outranked him in the battle for Monte Cassino. General Alexander impressed him as "indolent" and General Clark as "a flashy ignoramus."

It was typical of Tuker, when he heard nothing from any intelligence officials on how the monastery was actually built, that he sent an aide hunting through the used-book stores of liberated Naples to find some prewar tourist guidebooks. "After considerable trouble . . . " he tartly reported to Freyberg, "I have at last found a book, dated 1879, which gives certain details of the construction of the Monte Cassino Monastery." Specifically, the old guide disclosed that the monastery's walls were 10 to 15 feet thick, and that there was only one gate built out of "large stone blocks 9 to 10 metres long." How in God's name was an infantry unit supposed to break in? As Tuker had consistently argued, the only answer was to reduce the place to rubble. "If we were to be forced to attack directly," he informed Freyberg, "then it would have to be a matter of obliterating the *whole* Monte Cassino. . . ."

As Tuker implied with that preliminary "if," he thought such an onslaught unnecessary and undesirable. He had all along insisted that, instead, the monastery should be outflanked and isolated. "I went through hell on earth during the early days urging desperately that no attack on Monte Cassino should be contemplated," Tuker said later. "I could never understand why the U.S. Fifth Army decided to batter its head again and again against this most powerful position, held by some of the finest troops in the German Army in heavily wired and mined and fixed entrenchments."

Tuker's boss, General Freyberg, insisted frontal assault required the bombing.

But Rome had to be conquered as soon as possible, before the D-Day landings now planned for only four months in the future. Americans were getting irritated, moreover, by what they saw as repeated British suggestions for delaying and diversionary actions on every front. They were beginning to think, to put it bluntly, that the British were afraid to risk heavy casualties. That was not fear but common sense, the British might have answered, for in the war thus far they had suffered heavier losses than the Americans. "I always told Freyberg quite clearly," Tuker said later, "that nothing would induce me to attack this feature directly unless the garrison was reduced to helpless lunacy by sheer unending pounding for days and nights by air and artillery. . . ."

Tuker tried to reduce Freyberg and Clark to helpless lunacy by the pounding of his snappish memoranda, but he was suddenly silenced by a crippling attack of rheumatoid arthritis. That put the 4th Indian Division under the command of a more pliable brigadier named Harry Dimoline; and on February 11, Dimoline formally requested that the U.S. Army

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bomb the monastery. General Alexander therefore ordered Clark to bomb. Gruenther arranged the details. When the weather cleared, the bombers would strike on February 13.

But once ordered, the raid had to be canceled. Freyberg's troops had not had time to move back from their exposed positions near Monte Cassino. Next day, there was heavy snow. The 4th Indian Division finally sent back word from the mountain that it could be ready to attack on the night of February 16-17. Then Freyberg got a call from the Americans saying the raid would have to be staged the very next morning, February 15. There were reports of rainstorms, and all available bombers would soon be needed at Anzio. The troops on the mountain said they could not evacuate their positions by the following morning. Freyberg said they would have to do the best they could. Next morning when the first bombers arrived over Monte Cassino, an officer of the 4th Indian Division on the mountain shouted into a field telephone that the men weren't ready. "Even as I spoke," he recalled, "the roar drowned my voice as the first shower of eggs came down."

President Roosevelt called a press conference later that day to explain the raid. "The reason it was shelled [sic] was because it was being used by the Germans to shell us," Roosevelt said. "It was a German strongpoint—had artillery and everything up there in the abbey." Since there were actually no Germans in the abbey—no "garrison" of the kind that Tuker wanted to pound into "helpless lunacy"—the only people killed were between 150 and 250 of the Italian peasants hiding in the cellar. Stray bombs also wounded 24 of the Indian troops on the hill nearest the Germans because they had not been informed exactly when the raid was coming. When it was all over, Abbot Diamare, carrying a large wooden crucifix, led a procession of monks down the mountainside. According to one account, the German paratroopers and gunners in their trenches removed their helmets as the group passed. Some of the monks and peasants were badly wounded. One woman who had lost both her feet was carried on a ladder. She died on the way down.

When the Indians finally attacked they were beaten back. The same thing happened on the next night. Their third and final attack, on Feb-

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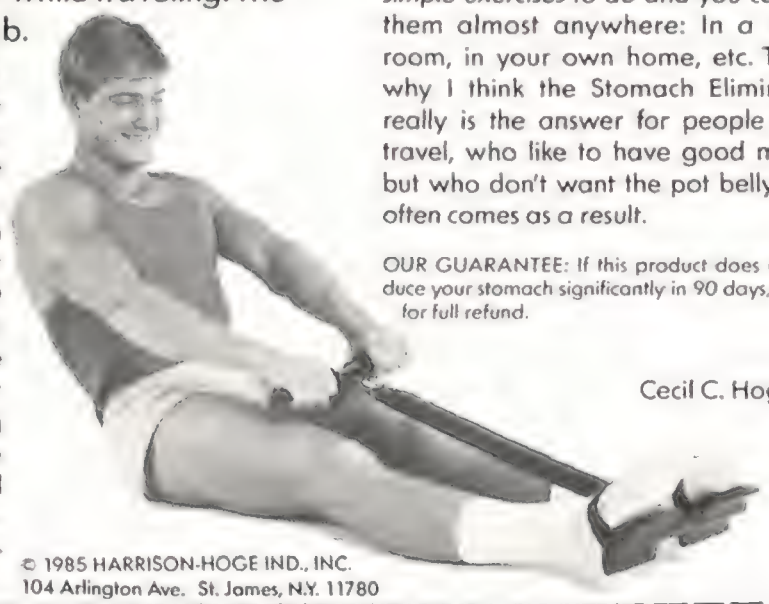

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ruary 17 by the light of a waning moon, was supposed to be the last and fiercest, irresistible. Two companies of Gurkhas were destroyed within 15 minutes. Even badly wounded, some of them fought their way through briars, wire, antipersonnel mines and machine-gun fire, to use their kukri knives on the Germans. Some were captured and never seen again. But the corpses of others were dangling among the thorns the next morning.

The obstinate Freyberg wanted to resume the attack next day, but after the 4th Indian Division lost 530 men in that third night alone, Dimoline persuaded him to give it up. Two days later, the Germans finally took advantage of the lull to move up inside the monastery walls and establish stronger defensive positions among the heaps of rubble. And the snow kept falling.

The next month, the now scarred and numbed Indians were replaced, like the Americans before them, this time by Gen. Wladyslaw Anders' Polish Corps. These were some 50,000 men who had been captured by the Soviets during that month-long nightmare in September 1939, in which both Hitler and Stalin attacked Poland from opposite sides. Only after Hitler invaded Russia in 1941 did Stalin agree to release his Polish captives from their Siberian prison camps to go and join the British forces in Iran. From there, they were shipped to the Italian front and the snow-covered ridges of Monte Cassino. Here they, too, attacked and they, too, were beaten back until finally, on the morning of May 18, a patrol by the 12th Podolski Lancers met no resistance. The German 1st Parachute Division had quietly pulled out during the night. The Poles raised their red-and-white banner over the ruins.

After the fighting, of course, there were the people to be cared for, the 10,000 or so survivors of what had once been the industrious town of Cassino at the foot of the mountain. The actual fighting, week after week,

had been fiercest not around the walls of the monastery but down here in the town. Now the survivors had to live on in the rat-infested rubble, without food, without fresh water.

Three months after the Polish capture of the monastery, Mayor Gaetano di Biasio wrote a letter to President Roosevelt, appealing for help for what he called his "martyred town." This had received only a cool reply from the U.S. Embassy in Rome. Meanwhile, in the shell of the monastery, about 35 monks and about 100 workmen began slowly clearing away the debris. Though the main bell had been destroyed, like almost everything else, the monks strung up a shell casing on which to sound the hours for prayer. As they sifted the wreckage, they followed a basic rule that the new abbot, Ildefonso Rea, laid down: everything should be reestablished *"dov'era, com'era,"* or "where it was, as it was."

But all this would take ages. "It goes very slowly," said Dom Francesco Vignanelli as he sat in a shack and catalogued fragments of stone. "Still, we've rebuilt six statues." Another monk, Dom Oderisco Graziosi, offered a comparison with the thousands of olive trees that once bloomed on the mountainside. "It takes an olive tree 30 years to bear fruit," he said. "For us it will be decades, perhaps centuries. But that day will come. . . ."

It seemed beyond possibility that the rebuilding could be finished in this century, but the Italian government, and not the Vatican, which had officially owned Monte Cassino since all monasteries were nationalized as part of the *Risorgimento* in 1868, managed to provide nearly $4 million over the years, some of it donated by Americans. In 1950, $4 million could be stretched a long way toward the rebuilding of an Italian monastery. The Benedictines, who number about 12,000 around the world, one-quarter of them in the United States, also managed without a great deal of

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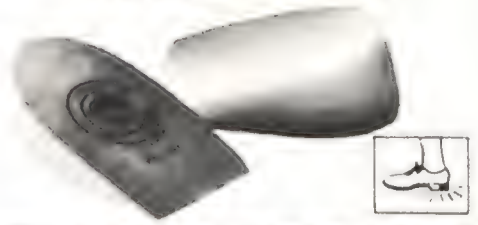

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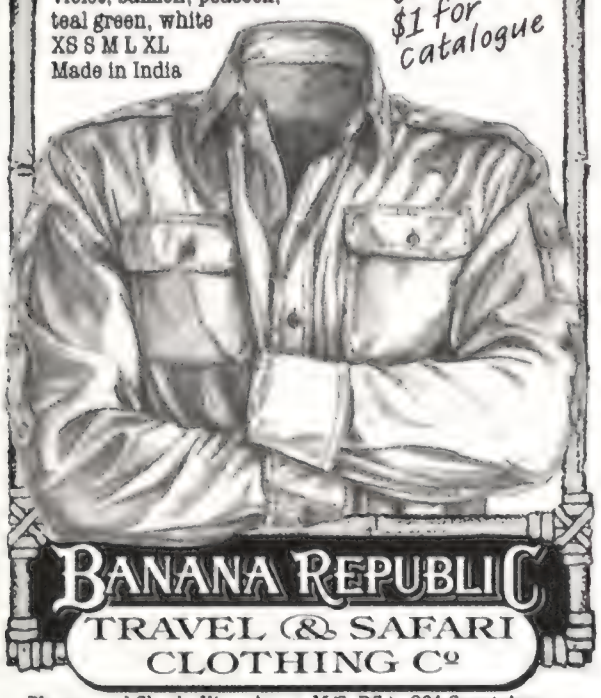

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Gen. Wladyslaw Anders (center) salutes colors at ceremony to celebrate valor shown by Free Polish Corps in taking Monte Cassino.

noise to raise a substantial sum. In 1964, Monte Cassino was ready to be reconsecrated by Pope Paul VI. There is still some work going on today—is any church ever really finished?—but Monte Cassino is once again there, alive.

The view out over the unchanging Liri Valley includes one sight that was not here in time past. It is a large cross formed out of cypresses that stands watch over the graves of more than 1,000 Poles who died here. The graves are identical, row on row of them, and from many of them a string of plastic rosary beads dangles. Nearby stands a large and defiant Polish eagle. These men died in exile, hoping that they would earn some honored place in Poland after the war. The Communist government of Poland pays their graves little attention or respect. Accordingly, the men buried here are still heroes to Solidarity, the Polish resistance movement. The busloads of Poles who come here now bring the emblems of Solidarity along with their red and white carnations. They stand together in the cool mountain breeze and sing Polish songs. Their voices are thin but determined, determined even in their thinness, not hopeful but enduring. "We Polish soldiers, for our freedom and yours," says a nearby plaque, "have given our souls to God, our bodies to the soil of Italy and our hearts to Poland."

The British are buried in a separate cemetery down at the foot of the mountain, the British and the Canadians and the New Zealanders and the Gurkhas. In contrast to almost any other spot in Italy, the grass grows thick and green here, as thick and green as an English lawn, and on every third or fourth grave a red rose blooms. The Italians have provided a plaque in honor of these "*valorosi Britanni*" who fell "*per la causa della giustizia e della libertà. . . .*" The graves themselves each bear a name and two dates, birth and death, the dates usually separated by only 20 years or so, and then one of those historical regimental names that labeled and identified each youth at the moment of his death: the Leicestershire Regiment, the Saskatoon Light In-

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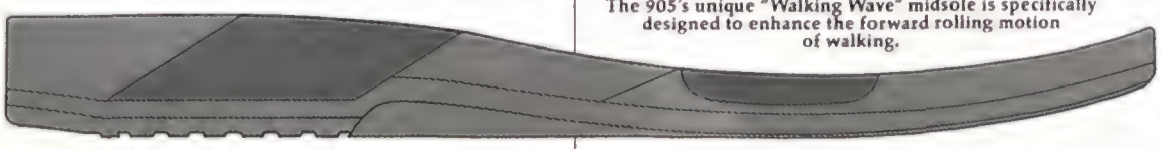

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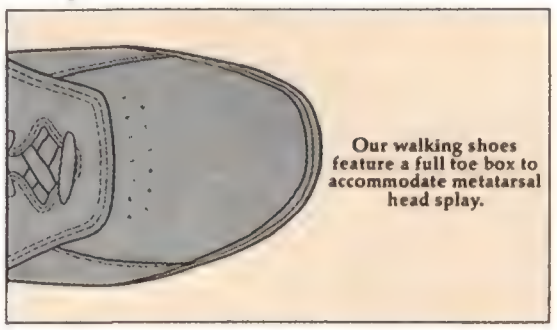

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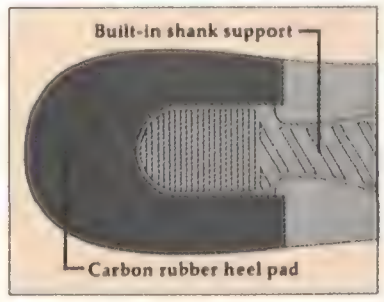

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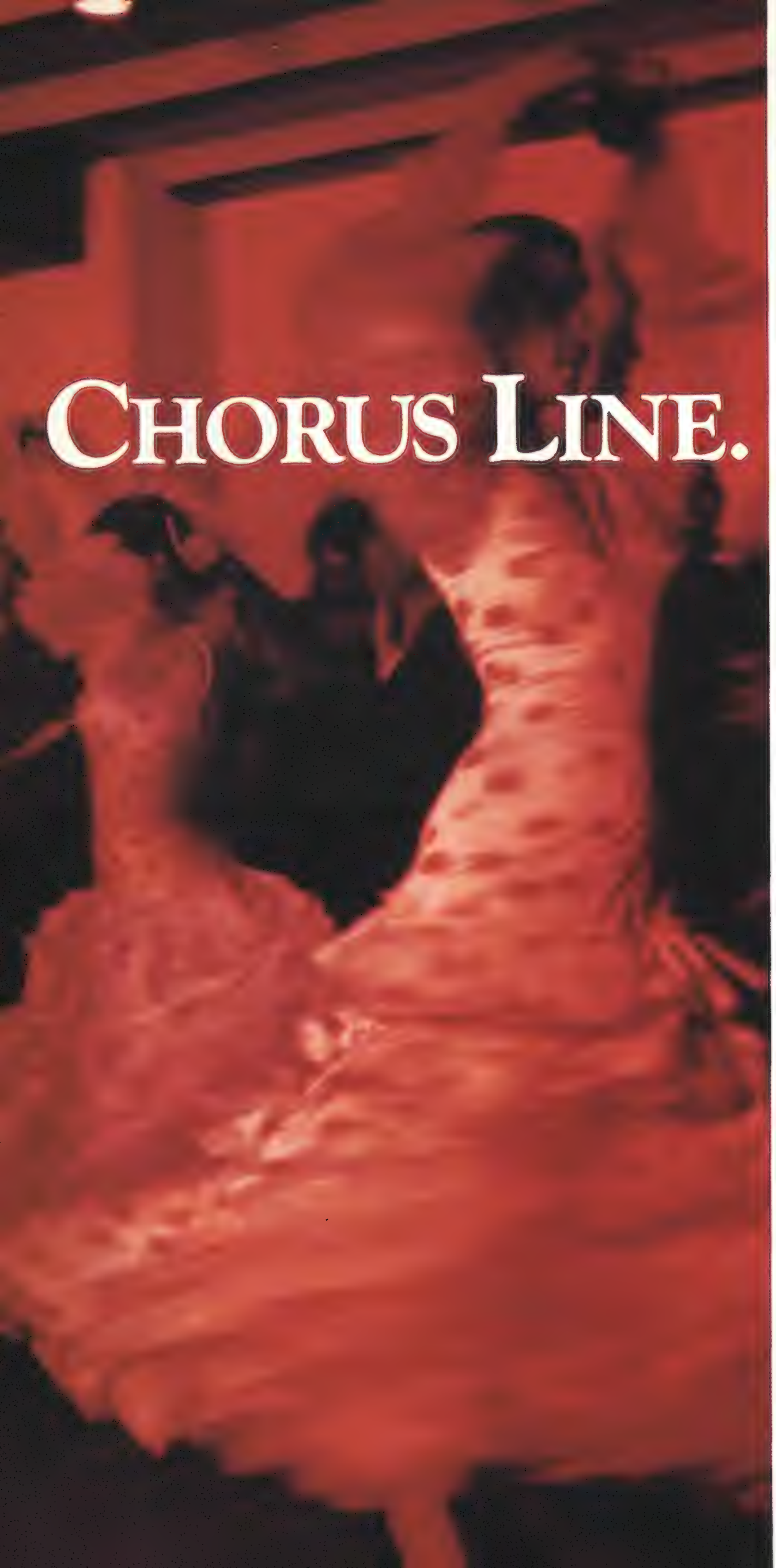

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fantry, the Royal Wiltshire Yeomen. On some graves, the parents or wives added a few lines of their own. Of Royal Artillery Gunner G. T. Smith, who died in 1944 at the age of 28, somebody wrote "We who loved you will never forget."

The American dead were all gathered up and taken to the cemetery at Anzio, but the Germans, too, lie not far from here, on the outer edge of Cassino, not only those killed here but those who died all over southern Italy, 20,000 of them in all, lying under the pines and the ivy.

There is a quiet statue of two grieving parents there and a mosaic of a dove and a plaque which states only that these soldiers lie "*zum letzten Ruhe.*" They are packed closely together in these graves, three names on each stone cross, and they too were very young, born in 1922 or '23, dead in 1944. *Pax.*

Visitors mourn at the grave of one of more than 1,000 men killed when the Polish army captured the abbey at last.

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Book reviews

The Sun Never Sets: Travels to the Remaining Outposts of the British Empire
Simon Winchester
Prentice Hall, $17.95

Maps of the world just a generation ago showed a good deal of the planet tinted pink, marking the dominions of the British Empire. Today the pink has virtually vanished from the map—the empire that began in the swashbuckling era of Queen Elizabeth I has shrunk to insignificance in the lifetime of the present Elizabeth, whose kingdom is resigned to far more buckle and much less swash.

Still, when journalist Simon Winchester set out to explore the remnants of Britain's imperial realm, it took him three years and 100,000 miles of travel to reach merely the populated parts of it (with one exception—he never managed to visit Pitcairn Island). Ragged and inconsequential, today's empire may be compared with its heyday, when 400 million people ("a quarter of mankind, a quarter of the land surface of the globe") paid homage to the Crown, yet it takes in 16 groups of islands, some 200 lesser isles and thousands more rocks and reefs and skerries, spread around the oceans and the time zones so that technically, still, "the sun never sets" on the Crown territories (a phrase originally written in German for Phillip II of Spain).

The surviving empire extends from Anguilla in the Caribbean Sea to the island of Zavodovski, from the volcanic morsel of Tristan da Cunha, where the islanders boil down penguins to make oil for waterproofing their boats, to the Falklands, where Britain and Argentina fought a war in 1982. It includes the Rock of Gibraltar and Hong Kong, a colony established for British opium traders in the 19th century and now the richest jewel in the imperial crown (but not for much longer—Hong Kong is to be relinquished to China in 1997). It embraces tiny Pitcairn, where many of the 44 remaining residents are descended from the sailors of the 1789 mutiny on the *Bounty*; and St. Helena, where the exiled Napoleon spent the last wretched years of his life and where today's inhabitants, unless they have gone abroad (and women are not allowed to leave the island until they are 23 years old), continue to think of the closing of ten shops, followed by an exodus of ten cars from Jamestown, as rush hour.

Winchester's sprightly account describes a lingering affection for England in the remote outposts: islanders hang pictures of the Queen on their walls, play cricket and serve afternoon tea. In the British Virgin Islands the inhabitants parade along Main Street every August to give thanks for their freedom from slavery, and the governor in his goose-feathered sun helmet proffers a salute.

But the quaint trappings conceal distressing realities, such as British neglect of the farthest-flung dependencies, and drug smuggling in some of the Caribbean colonies.

And despite the tea and the cricket, Winchester finds the Crown lands lying deep in the shadow of the United States. In the Chagos Islands, the entire population was uprooted in the 1960s and 1970s and moved 1,200 miles from home to make way for U.S. military installations on Diego Garcia. On Tristan da Cunha, where money was introduced less than 30 years ago, all 300 residents of the storm-swept island now spend their Sunday evenings watching *Dallas* on television. The *Wall Street Journal* seems to have become the bible of the Cayman

Policemen on island of St. Helena, 1,500 souls, maintain stern demeanor.

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Islands; and in Bermuda, the currency is tied to the U.S. dollar and the airport is an American base.

In the scattered remains of its empire, with the starched uniforms and the goose-feathered hats, Britain can still muster some of the old pomp, Winchester notes, but today it is the United States that provides the circumstance.

David Lancashire
Globe and Mail, Toronto

The New Grove Dictionary of American Music
Edited by H. Wiley Hitchcock and Stanley Sadie
Grove's Dictionaries of Music, $495

The accuracy and comprehensiveness of a major new reference work—surely its most notable attributes—can scarcely be appraised fairly before being given the test of extended practical use. Still, immediately upon publication, it almost inevitably becomes fair game for nitpickers and show-offs. Experts race to claim errors, omissions and exaggerations.

However, in the case of *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, the phenomenon of professional critics straining at gnats has hardly been conspicuous. One reason may be the dictionary's size—four volumes, 2,600 pages, 5,000 articles—which should discourage snap judgments. Another may be that the dictionary seems to answer an urgent need, there being, as the preface correctly states, "no other reference work on the music of the United States that is comprehensive in approach, academically sound, and written by a team of specialists."

But perhaps the most important reason after all is that, despite its daunting bulk (which makes it somewhat inconvenient to curl up with), the *American Grove* is user-friendly. About an astonishing variety of subjects—from Cannonball Adderley to Pinchas Zukerman, Marian Anderson to Frank Zappa, Gene Autry to Efrem Zimbalist, Asian-American music to music of the Zuni—the entries, contributed by some 900 specialists, are written in ways that make browsing a happy experience. Clarity and objectivity were obviously the watchwords. Pedantry has been ruled out and critical opinion held to discreet levels.

But first there's that tactile pleasure as one gently separates new pages still stuck lightly at the corners, then the pleasures of recognition and discovery as one meanders through text and pictures, lingering with what appeals. Hard to cavil when the experience is so agreeable.

Amusing encounters from a first browse-through: prima donna Emma Abbott (1850-91), important for the role she played in popularizing opera in the United States, nevertheless offended critics with the license she took with scores, such as interpolating the hymns of Lowell Mason into the operas of Donizetti and Bellini. Irving Berlin (b. 1888), who has published about 1,500 songs, is self-taught as a pianist and plays predominantly on the black keys of an instrument that has a lever under its keyboard for automatic transposition. Florence Foster Jenkins (1868-1944) "seems to have taken her singing seriously, and to have been unaware of the gulf that lay between her technique and the repertory she undertook. . . ." In the Second String Quartet of Charles Ives (1874-1954), four men "converse, discuss, argue, fight, shake hands, shut up—then walk up the mountainside to view the firmament."

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The publisher supplies a fact sheet of impressive statistics: more than 600 illustrations, more than 500 discographies, more than 3,000 cross-references, more than 3,500 entries on composers and performers. (Also impressive is the list price of $495, although the dictionary is clearly produced as much for the everyday music lover as for the professional.) There are more than 1,000 articles on classical and avant-garde composers and 300 on rock music. The musical life of America's cities is described in 60 articles. Generic subjects include work songs, patriotic music, vaudeville and film music, electroacoustic music, music in advertising, women in music. Of unusual interest are the articles on the music of nearly 40 American Indian tribes or tribal groups.

A word on the antecedents of the *American Grove* is in order, for this remarkable British-American family of music dictionaries is an old one. Its progenitor was Sir George Grove, engineer, editor, music scholar and friend of Brahms. The first of six editions was published in parts, from 1877 to 1890. An *American Supplement* was published in 1920. Immediate forebear of the current dictionary and today the definitive overall authority, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* came out in 20 volumes in 1980. In the preparation of the American dictionary, where subjects in the two overlapped, old articles were either recommissioned or they were revised and expanded to create new articles. Some 3,500 are brand-new.

The British-American collaboration continues. Stanley Sadie, editor of the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, is one of the two editors of *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*. He has been editor of the British journal *Musical Times* since 1967. The American editor is H. Wiley Hitchcock, Distinguished Professor of Music at the City University of New York and founding director of the Institute for Studies in American Music at Brooklyn College.

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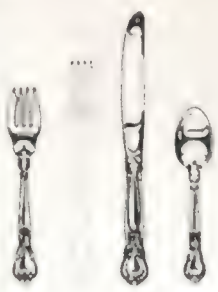

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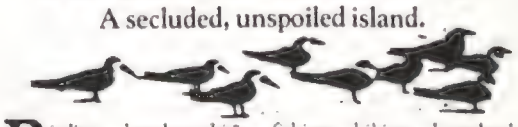

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First printed in 1982 by Alan James Robinson's Cheloniidae Press in an edition of 300 copies, it is one of a growing number of deluxe illustrated books and "artists' books"—works of exceptional graphic art and design to which in the past only collectors and scholars have had ready access—to be reissued in an affordable and attractive trade edition.

As a bestiary, or book of animal fact and lore, it belongs within the tradition of such compilations traceable to the *Physiologus*, an anonymous work of the early Christian era. As an instance of fine bookmaking, it draws on centuries-old craft traditions revived in modern times by William Morris. It is also an illustrator's showcase, as bestiaries have been for countless other artists, notably, within the past hundred or so years, Toulouse-Lautrec, Raoul Dufy, Alexander Calder and Leonard Baskin. It is arranged as an abecedary or "ABC"—another of the oldest kinds of illustrated book.

Robinson's illustrations—26 wood engravings and 26 smaller linecuts for the initial letters heading each page of text—are elegantly realized. The engravings, especially, have an engaging directness of approach that feels like a visual equivalent of candor. The images of the walrus and tortoise are among those with an arresting, portraitlike intensity. Others settle broadly around a characteristic action or pose, as the ostrich strutting hugely past.

"Wicked sea-officers" were said to be "at death transformed into tortoises."

There are touches of wit everywhere. In most illustrations, the picture frame doubles as a bit of minimalist stage setting. The sloth, a tree climber in the wild, hangs from the top of its frame; other animals, not to be caged, bolt from, dive or leap out of theirs. The hippopotamus in the initial linecut has colossal jaws poised to lower the boom on the letter H. In several images, Robinson's subjects face the viewer with an oddly ironical gaze, as much as to suggest that in an age of endangered-species lists (tattered bestiaries of a kind), half the wonder of the animal world lies in the bare fact of its existence.

In her Introduction, Laurie Block has set down lively notes toward a history of Western descriptive writing about animals. The long line of medieval bestiaries, direct descendants of the *Physiologus*, were primarily works of religious faith in which animals were assigned allegorical meanings. The travelers' accounts that proliferated during the Age of Discovery, from around 1500 onward, served equally to expand Europeans' knowledge of nature and to redefine for them the nature of knowledge itself. As observation and the scientific method increasingly displaced knowledge-by-faith, many animal myths were discredited and the modern understanding of animate nature as a "reality with its own unique history, integrity, and order" was established.

Some myths die harder than others. John Hill in his *History of Animals* (1752) noted with contempt that in London a narwhal skeleton had lately been exhibited "for money" under pretense of being a unicorn's; and that "The tooth . . . was known among collectors of curiosities long before the fish itself. . . . It is but a century ago that there were only two or three of them known of . . . at present we have scarce any of our collectors" without a similar bogus treasure. Among the other passages excerpted by Block from diaries, natural histories and a wide variety of related sources, many the work of amateurs, are breathless sighting reports of the kangaroo and other animals as yet unknown to Europeans; pre-Linnaean gropings for adequate descriptive terms (for instance, the composite names "bird-camel" for ostrich and "camelopard" for giraffe); advice to fishermen and gastronomes; Marco Polo's rhinoceros; Darwin's tortoise; Sir Thomas Browne's "mixt and dubious" griffon.

Leonard S. Marcus
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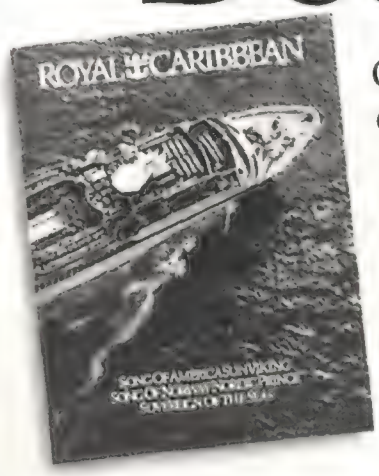

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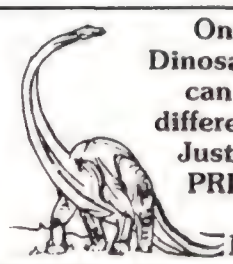

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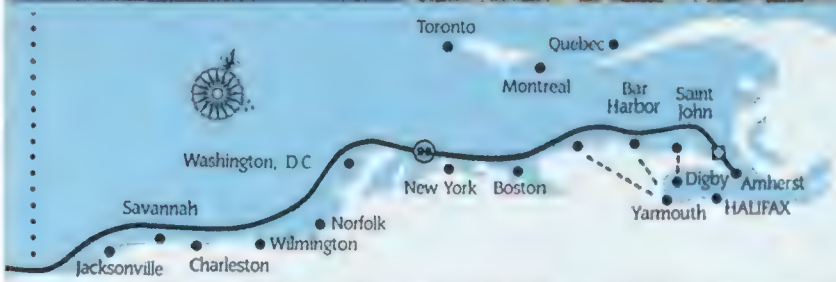

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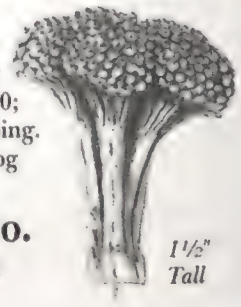

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Special April exhibits and events

National Museum of Natural History
The Far Side of Science: Cartoons by Gary Larson (April 9-May 31) See *Highlights continued.*

National Portrait Gallery
The Art of Henry Inman (April 2-August 2) Portraits by 19th-century artist.

National Air and Space Museum
Wings & Things Open House (Paul E. Garber Facility, Suitland, Maryland; April 25, 26; 10 A.M.-3 P.M.) Annual open house with demonstrations.

Renwick Gallery
American Art Deco (April 17-July 26) Includes 180 works in various media.

Other upcoming events

Washington Craft Show

The fifth annual Washington Craft Show, sponsored by the Women's Committee of the Smithsonian Associates, will be

held on April 24-26, 1987, in the Departmental Auditorium, 1301 Constitution Avenue, N.W., across the street from the National Museum of American History. One hundred craft artists will exhibit and sell original work in a variety of media. There will be an admission charge.

Musical Weekend

Highlights of the 15th Musical Weekend, May 1-3, will include the Smithsonian Chamber Players in a private concert using authentic period instruments; the National Symphony Orchestra; dinners in the Arts and Industries Building and the Renwick Gallery; tea and music at the Turkish Embassy and champagne breakfast in the Bird House of the National Zoo. For further information, write: Musical Weekend, Room 4124 NMAH, Smithsonian, Washington, D.C. 20560.

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Lecture and Seminar Program

The Lecture and Seminar Program will visit Toronto for the first time on April 1-5. The series, cosponsored by the Royal Ontario Museum, includes lectures on Antarctic exploration and volcanology and a seminar on gemstones and minerals. Topeka, Kansas, will also host a series, April 8-12, featuring lectures on tropical rain forests and Expressionist art, a nature-photography seminar and a performance of Afro-American music. Oshkosh, Wisconsin, will be visited April 23-26, where lectures on mineralogy and American Impressionism and a special three-day seminar, "Aviation History, Technology and Restoration," will be offered.

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The Best of The New Yorker (eight-week series beginning April 15; 8 P.M.) Writers, critics and artists associated with the magazine share their thoughts.
A Tribute to Duke Ellington (April 21; 8 P.M.) Lecture by Gunther Schuller.
Exploring Spanish Dance: Ancient and Modern (April 25, 8 P.M.: April 26, 3:30 P.M.) Performances featuring Ricardo Villa and singer Flory Jagoda.

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San Francisco (April 11-May 24) *Hooray for Yiddish Theater in America!*, Jewish Community Museum.
Tuskegee, Alabama (April 13-May 12) *Black Wings: The American Black in Aviation*, Tuskegee University.

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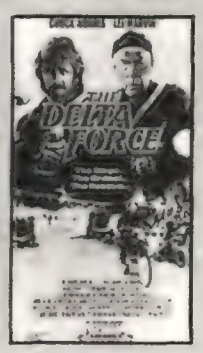

DELTA FORCE
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AFTER HOURS
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DOWN AND OUT IN BEVERLY HILLS
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RETURN OF THE JEDI
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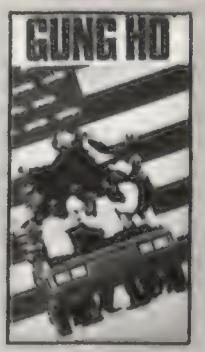

GUNG HO
4225012

CLEOPATRA	0579012	OKLAHOMA!	0054052
THE PARENT TRAP	5288022	BEVERLY HILLS COP	2053102
THE HOWLING	0527202	CADDYSHACK	6023002
WITNESS	4114052	WUTHERING HEIGHTS	3126032
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WEST SIDE STORY	0505342	POLICE ACADEMY	6049002
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Highlights continued

The Far Side at NMNH

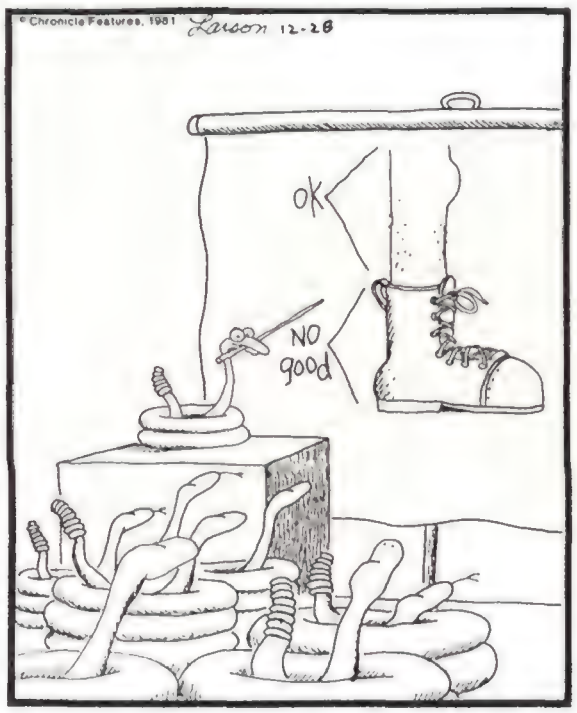
It had to happen sometime, and it happened at the California Academy of Sciences. When cartoonist Gary Larson came for a visit in 1984, public-information officer Carol Prince asked invertebrate zoologist Terry Gosliner to join her and Larson as she introduced him around. As the trio made their way through the halls, Larson was delighted to see three or four of his cartoons on almost every office door in the place.

Eventually, the idea of an exhibition was floated with Larson. "He was almost awestruck by the idea," says Gosliner. "He seemed to think that that's the sort of thing you do at the end of a career."

To sell the idea to the CAS exhibition committee, Prince, Gosliner and other staffers had a brainstorming session; they had to link the cartoons to the scientific aspect of the institution. "The thing that came to my mind," says Gosliner, who ended up organizing the show, "is that you can classify many of Gary's cartoons into six or seven discrete natural-history categories—interactions of predators and prey, the evolution of Man, phylogenetic trees, extinction and so forth. The committee bought the idea, so we asked Gary for everything in those categories."

After a successful debut, the 400-work exhibit opens at NMNH on April 9. At CAS it broke down a big barrier, says Gosliner. "It brought a lot of people to the academy who generally don't frequent natural-history museums . . . they frequent bus stations or something, I guess." This is no surprise: breaking down barriers is what Gary Larson's cartoons are all about.

Constance Bond



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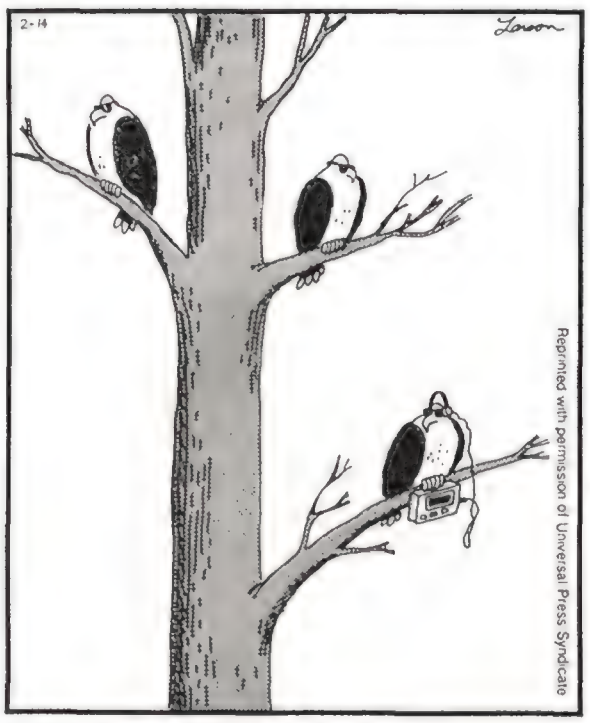

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New England and Hudson River Cruise May 30-June 13: Aboard the *Newport Clipper*, sail from Boston to New York. Visit West Point, Nantucket and Newport, featuring an elegant dinner at the Vanderbilts' Marble House.

Bryce, Zion and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon June 4-14 and August 31-September 10: Hike canyon trails to admire foliage, wildlife and geological history.

Chicago June 17-21: Walking tours and special programs to study the city's stunning architectural legacies.

Civil War—the Eastern Theater June 18-28: Beginning in Washington, D.C., travel to Richmond, the Shenandoah Valley and Gettysburg to retrace the events of the war.

Grand Canyon July 3-13: View magnificent landscape while rafting down the Colorado River with expert boatmen.

Sojourn in Santa Fe July 19-26: Leisurely explore pueblo villages and scenic sites.

Pacific Northwest August 4-15: A new cultural tour of Seattle, Vancouver and Victoria for art and history enthusiasts.

Alaskan Landscapes August 6-17: Watch bears and caribou while hiking in Denali National Park; float down the Kenai River and meet Eskimo artists in Nome.

Middle Fork August 7-15: An unforgettable river trip on Idaho's Salmon River.

Lewis & Clark Trail August 8-15: Enjoy Idaho's spectacular wilderness scenery as you follow portions of the overland 1805 trail by horse and vehicle.

Alaska's Inside Passage August 18-25: Informal cruise from Ketchikan to view wildlife and glaciers at close range.

Colorado Mining and Railroads August 20-29: Relive the Gold Rush days when steam locomotion opened the West.

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Shadows of the Past—Châteaux, Caves and Villages of the Dordogne May 9-23, September 12-26: Explore this fascinating region of France. Tour includes four days in Paris.

Irish Walk May 15-27 or September 24-October 5: Stay in castles and take day hikes through a variety of settings in the Ring of Kerry and Connemara.

Odyssey of Flight June 3-15: An aviation tour of England and France. See the world's finest aviation museums and flying demonstrations. Includes the Paris air show.

Wild Highlands of Scotland June 4-22: Enjoy the outdoors while studying this area's cultural and natural history.

Trans-Siberia June 18-July 9: Journey by rail across Siberia from east to west, then choose from excursions to Outer Mongolia, Central Asia or the Caucasus Republics.

Lakeland Hikes June 19-July 3: Hike and explore this corner of England so beloved by writers and artists.

Montreal/Quebec July 7-18: Experience the charm and hospitality of France in the New World.

Finnish Summer July 11-26: Attend the Savonlinna Opera Festival, then explore southeastern Finland with its spectacular scenery, castles and museums.

Scotland by Train July 11-26: Travel by steam trains and coastal steamers from Edinburgh and Inverness to the wild highlands, mountain lochs, Skye and Glasgow.

Iceland July 25-August 9: An adventure tour that circles this austere, beautiful land. Study unique geology, plant and bird life.

Voyage to Northern Lands August 15-29: Cruise from Iceland to Greenland and Newfoundland, then up the St. Lawrence River to Quebec and Montreal.

Alpine Hike August 16-30: A challenge for adventurous hikers through the majestic mountains and valleys of Switzerland.

London and the English Countryside August 30-September 13: Design your own nine-day London program, then enjoy five extra days on a countryside excursion.

Oxford Smithsonian Seminar September 11-26: Be an Oxford scholar. Attend classes and field trips.

Canadian Rockies September 14-23: Glacial mountains, canyons, hot springs and great resorts beckon hikers to Banff, Jasper and Lake Louise.

Scandinavian Design—Past and Present September 20-October 4: Enjoy a wealth of artistic expression. See museums, galleries, design ateliers, artists' studios.

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May 28-31

Native Americans in U.S. History
Trace the history of Anglo-Indian relations and visit the Oneida Nation Museum.

BioDiversity
Explore the diversity of the Earth's biological resources during lectures and tours.

Exploration in Space
Learn about future lunar and planetary missions and plans for the shuttles and space stations.

Appalachian State University
June 22-26

Story, Lore and Song
Experience Appalachia's rich folk culture in the company of scholars, local singers and storytellers.

The Magical World of Minerals and Gems
Learn how minerals and gems form, and collect your own samples during a day-long field trip in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Southeastern Indian Cultures
Trace the history of this region's native Americans through lectures and a visit to an important archaeological site.

Washington, D.C.
June 28-July 3

Photojournalism
Smithsonian photographers and guest experts will introduce you to the fundamentals as you document life in the nation's capital.

Garden Planning and Design
Visit Washington's finest gardens and tour Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania with Smithsonian horticulturist James Buckler.

Sculpture in Washington, D.C.
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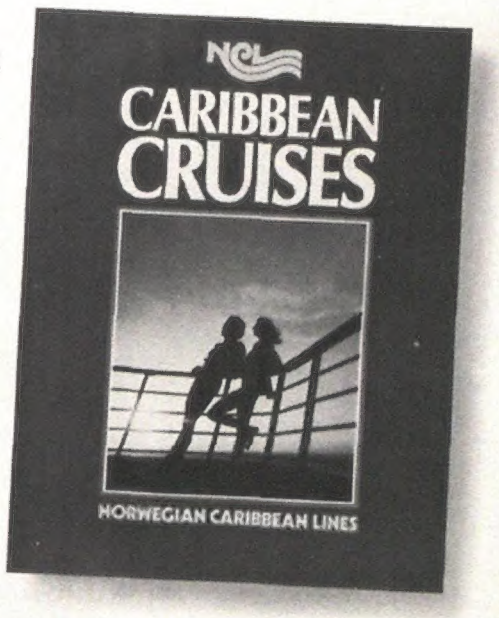

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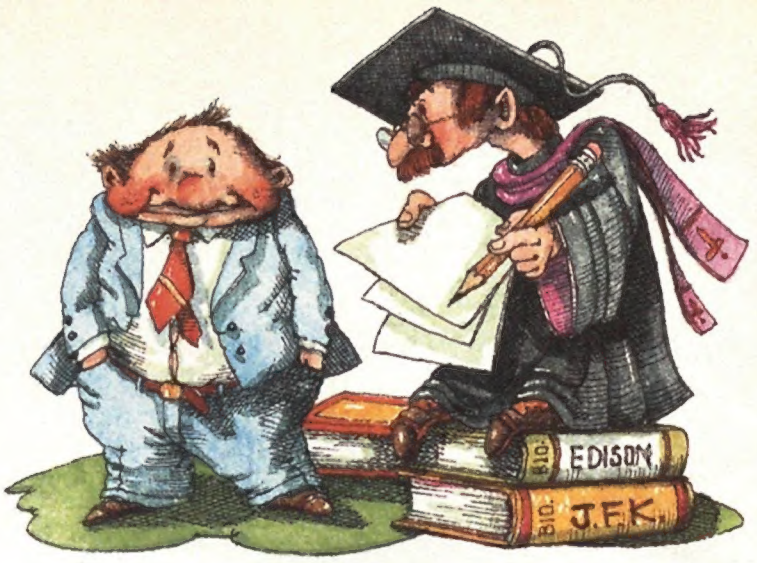
By John Skow

"Negative biography": a Who's Who for who's not



A problem unnoticed by most of us, but alarming to those affected, is that college English departments are turning out biographical scholars faster than the society is producing great men and women. Fortunately help is at hand. Working round the clock, researchers at the Ibid Institute have developed an exciting and provocative concept called negative biography. As will be seen from the following examples of positive negativism, greatness in the usual sense is not an issue:

Gwendolyn Dolorosa, 36, dental technician, divorced.

Because Ms. Dolorosa was not the daughter of a beautiful equestrienne who performed in Eastern Europe with a one-ring circus, she did not escape from Bulgaria in a base drum, did not show precocious aptitude as an acrobat, and at the astonishing age of 12, in the center ring at Madison Square Garden, did not become the first female person ever to ride a Shetland pony bareback across a tightrope.

In her middle teens she did not meet the Rolling Stones lead singer Mick Jagger in an elevator, and so impress the rock star with her innocence and clear-eyed intelligence that he quit music and enrolled at Western Michigan University as a combined philosophy and fine-arts major.

Her movements from 1981 to 1984 are not mysterious, and it is not thought that she spent this period running a gambling casino in Macao. Last Tuesday she did not win a record $27,534,229 in the state lottery.

Shelby Finback, 67, accountant, married, two children.

At the age of three, Mr. Finback did not teach himself to write Latin and Greek verse. At nine he did not write a letter to Albert Einstein that forced the great physicist to rethink a minor but important phase of his unified field theory.

Because he did not parachute behind German lines in Holland during World War II with a suitcase full of cheese blintzes for Queen Wilhelmina, he was not decorated by a grateful Dutch government. His stormy 10-year affair with the late actress Ingrid Bergman took place only in his mind, and therefore he did not fight a duel on Corfu with Italian film director Roberto Rossellini, Miss Bergman's second husband.

Mr. Finback took no part in the discovery and translation of the Dead Sea Scrolls, nor in the Paris peace negotiations at the close of the Vietnam war. He is not a member of the President's Council of Economic Advisors. He has lived in Wortfield, Connecticut, since 1964, and is less than ten pounds overweight.

Ethel Featherless, 48, fifth-grade teacher, married, three children.

Mrs. Featherless is sure that she has led at least 14 previous lives, beginning in the late Pleistocene period. However she is fairly certain that in neolithic times, as an unusually tall, slim teenager, she did not, through sheer force of will, drive a saber-toothed tiger from her tribe's encampment in the valley of the Inn River, and thus did not live to the age of 96 revered as a semidivine medicine woman and healer. Millennia later, as a five-year-old child in Troy, she was sick with the measles and did not see the Greek soldiers slip from the belly of the Trojan horse and throw open the city gates to let in the hordes of crafty Odysseus and fierce Achilles.

During the tumultuous years of the French Revolution, she bore four children to a baker in Oslo. In 1849 she and her husband, a dry-goods merchant in Pittsburgh, heard news of the gold strike at Sutter's Mill, California, and decided that pulling up stakes and heading west was a dumb idea. In her present existence, her husband, a prominent Toledo orthodontist, shows little interest in her views on reincarnation. She feels that life is passing her by.

Fred Coomly, 10, fifth-grade student.

Fred has not yet run off to sea on a 65-foot trimaran he may find soon floating 10 feet offshore in the Maumee River, near his home in Toledo, Ohio. The beautiful red sailboat will be fully stocked with food and videocassettes, but there will be nobody aboard, and thus it will belong to whoever salvages it. Fred's fifth-grade teacher, Mrs. Featherless, will say to him that five or ten years of cruising on his boat, which will also have scuba gear and 3-D television, will be a lot more important than going to school.

Probably his boat will be attacked by a giant squid and will run aground on an island with no inhabitants but with a lot of food and good TV reception. In all likelihood he will stay there several years, growing to about seven feet four, and he will be a great basketball player, practicing alone shooting gourds through a hoop made of shark jaws. And when he is rescued he will try out for the Celtics, and Larry Bird, who will be about 40 then but still amazing, will admit that Fred is the greatest talent ever to come into the NBA. Fred will want to pull down rebounds for Bird, but Larry will say, "Kid, I'm old and hurting; it's your team now."

Fred has not done tomorrow's geography assignment, which is a report on agriculture in Brazil.

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